



THE LAXMI NARAYAN SINGH TOWN HALL, JAIPUR

By S. S. M. F. B. B.

# INDIAN WRITERS IN COUNCIL

PROCEEDINGS

of the

FIRST ALL-INDIA WRITERS' CONFERENCE

( JAIPUR, 1945 )

Organised by

THE ALL-INDIA CENTRE OF THE P. E. N.

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# INTRODUCTION

## THE BACKGROUND

The All-India Centre of the P E N. had been in existence for five years when, on its behalf, Shrimati Sophia Wadia, its Founder, extended a warm invitation to the International P E N. Club to hold its Congress in India in 1940. The Congress was to have been held in the ordinary course in Tokyo, but at the time of the Prague Congress in 1938, the Japanese Centre withdrew its earlier invitation. This was India's opportunity, and Sophia Wadia seized it. She now suggested that the Congress might be held in Mysore, and promptly Sir Mirza Ismail, then Mysore's Dewan, accepted the suggestion :

" The prospect of having amidst us such a distinguished body of writers from all the world over is one that should commend your proposal to acceptance. I, therefore, hereby extend on behalf of His Highness a most cordial invitation to the members of the P E N. to hold their 1940 Congress in the Mysore State "

Already, during the first five years, the All-India Centre had much useful activity to its credit. Its monthly journal, *The Indian P.E.N.*, the many public lectures arranged under its auspices, the personality of the National President, the late Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore, the tireless energy and idealism of the Founder, these had given the India Centre a certain status in the literary world. Shrimati Sarojni Naidu, then one of the Vice-Presidents of the India Centre, in the course of her message to the Fourth Annual Meeting of the Centre held in March 1938 remarked :

" I think that during the year the P E N. has done remarkable and enduring work in bringing the literary activities of all the provinces together in the monthly bulletin. It is very stimulating for writers to be brought in touch with the work of fellow writers in other tongues and other provinces, and to grow more and more conscious of the unity of Indian literature through all the diversities of languages and cultural zones "

" It is a great service to render and the P E N. may well be proud of its accomplishment as a link between linguistic areas of literary enterprise and achievement "

It was thus no mere reckless youth—albeit hardly five years old—that came forward with an offer to act the host to the International Congress. Fellow members abroad, on their part, eagerly looked forward to the Mysore Congress. Officers of the P E N as well as ordinary members wrote to the India Centre, and the following extracts from letters will indicate the warmth with which the Prague Congress had responded to India's invitation.

"Nothing could be more attractive to me and certainly to every member of our group than the expectation to visit your country on the occasion of the 1940 Congress."

"Your far-away land which always is fascinating in my eyes."

"Your Members seem faithful friends, not strangers in a far-off land. Although we are a very small band of P E N we are proud to be joined to a centre of such world-wide fame as 'Indian P E N'."

So, then, the International P E N Congress was coming to India—to Mysore. We felt elated—"we" meaning those both within and without the P E N organisation. Now and then—and, as the days passed, more frequently—nameless doubts darkened the horizon. The political situation—Hitler—Czechoslovakia—the Sino-Japanese "undeclared" war. What next? But, nothing daunted, the India Centre started work in connection with the 1940 Congress. On 27th October 1938, an important meeting was held in Bombay at the K R Cama Oriental Institute. The Hon Mr B G. Kher, then as now Bombay's Premier, took the chair. Dewan Bahadur K M Jhaveri, Mr S A Brelvi, Mr K M Munshi, and Shrimati Sophia Wadia spoke on the occasion. Mr Munshi expressed the hope that "the literary men who will gather here in 1940 will strive to see the world united under the flag of literature, united not for destruction but that the beautiful may flourish in the minds and the hearts of men." Sophia Wadia appealed to all to serve the common ideal of peace and freedom of the spirit, and ended by quoting Whitman's lines

- \* That we all labour together, transmitting the same  
charge and succession,  
Till we saturate time and eras, that the men and women  
of races, ages to come, may prove brethren and  
lovers as we are.

It was proposed to hold other similar meetings to

"acquaint the public" with P E N. ideals. Besides, it was now suggested that the India Centre should bring out a series of brochures on the various Indian regional literatures so that foreign visitors no less than Indians unfamiliar with the many literatures of India could gain a fair conspectus of the variegated Indian literary scene. A tentative list was drawn up, and it looked as though the whole series would be out before long.

The uneasiness, however, persisted. The Munich compromise had poisoned the atmosphere. The world was literally living on the edge of a precipice—and a World War seemed a dire certainty. Even so, brave in her faith, Shrimati Sophia Wadia started for the Stockholm Congress, scheduled to be held from the 4th to the 7th of September 1939. She carried messages to the Congress from Tagore, Sarojini Naidu, Radhakrishnan, Sir Mirza Ismail and Gandhiji. The burden of the "present" oppressed them, but they refused to be crushed by it. Tagore wrote:

"In these days of critical anxiety and crude physical display, it would be strange if we were not sometimes tempted to lose faith in the moral and intellectual forces for which we stand. Yet it is vital that that faith should live and grow, and I pray that the writers of my own country, with its deep and ancient intuitions of the fundamental unity of life and reality, may play their part in its rekindling."

Sarojini Naidu sent no less moving a message:

"In this terrible hour when the whole world trembles on the very edge of disaster, a grave and heavy burden rests on the men and women of all races and cultures who are endowed with the noble gift of vision and the sacred gift of words. It behoves them to stand together in a fearless and invincible unity of purpose to affirm, interpret and sustain the great ideals and principles of equity, liberty and human fellowship which alone are the authentic and enduring guarantees of civilisation, progress and peace."

Gandhiji wrote, more succinctly:

"How I wish that literary men and women all the world over would combine to make war an impossibility."

Meanwhile war broke out in Europe, the Stockholm Congress was abandoned, and a long night descended upon human civilisation. But the dream and the vision persisted, —their embers could not die altogether!

Like the Stockholm Congress, the Mysore Congress too had to go out of the picture. An international congress while

the war was on was obviously an impracticable proposition. At the time of the Sixth Annual Meeting of the India Centre, held on 28th March 1940, a more modest proposal was made—a national congress of literary men, under P E N auspices, to be held in the following December or January. Prof N K Sidhanta suggested that, taking advantage of the fact that the All-India English Teachers' Conference was to meet at Lucknow in December, the P E N Conference also could be held there about the same time. The Executive Committee, however, went into the whole question later and decided that conditions were too abnormal to countenance the idea of an All-India Writers' Conference under P E N auspices. On the other hand, it was resolved to go ahead with the publication of the projected brochures on the various Indian literatures. The original modest plan of a 48-page booklet on each regional literature has since been considerably amplified—and this is certainly a great gain. It may be added, in passing, that so far four of these volumes—devoted to Assamese, Bengali, Indo-Anglian and Telugu literatures respectively—have come out,\* and twelve more are to follow.

The Mysore Congress was out of the question, and so was even a strictly limited conference of Indian writers. Frustration was the key-word of those harrowing war years. Would the clouds ever disperse? The lights had gone out—ages ago, it seemed!—would they ever be lighted again? The war did not touch us directly—as directly, that is, as the British or the French or the Russians or the Poles or the Chinese were touched—but here too we suffered immitigable privations—we suffer them still—and frustration plumbed greater depths than ever in the Bengal tragedy, in the Bijapur famine, in the Malabar famine. It was, however, clear towards the close of 1944 that the War as such could not last very much longer. It was necessary to make a determined effort to break the spell that had nearly petrified all constructive national activity. The season of sterility should not be allowed to have an endless run. The body in a swoon should be shaken a bit so that the pulses of reviving life could beat again. So when, in 1944, Sardar K. M. Panikkar

\* Published on behalf of the P E N All-India Centre by the International Book House, Ltd, Bombay 1

revived the idea of an All-India Writers' Conference, the Executive Committee of the P.E.N. decided to try to organise such a conference.

### THE PREPARATIONS

SRI MIrza Ismail was then the Prime Minister of Jaipur State. As Shrimati Sophia Wadia explained later, "All we had to do was to write to him about our plans and to ask him whether we might come, and a most cordial and immediate reply was received saying, 'Welcome' ". The decision of the Executive Committee was endorsed by the Eleventh Annual General Meeting of the India Centre held on 13th March 1945 and the meeting decided further that the main theme of the Jaipur Conference should be, "The Development of the Indian Literatures as a Uniting Force ". Shrimati Sarojini Naidu, National President of the India Centre since Gurudev passed away, was chosen President of the Conference as well. It was also hoped that a few select distinguished foreign writers would be able to attend the Conference as fraternal delegates.

The prospect brightened, of a sudden, and the end of the war came, first in Europe, then in the East, and in August 1945, rather sooner than most people had expected, the six-year-old nightmare was over. Mr. Attlee displaced Mr. Churchill, Lord Pethick-Lawrence became the new Secretary of State for India. The vicious circle of frustration was broken at last, India's trusted national leaders—among them, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, one of the Vice-Presidents of the P.E.N. India Centre—were released from prison; and the times, so full of renewing life and resurgent hope, were more propitious for the success of the P.E.N. Conference than had at first seemed possible. Pandit Nehru agreed not only to find time to attend the Conference, but also to initiate the main discussion on "The Development of the Indian Literatures as a Uniting Force "

From England, besides Mr. Hermon Ould, the International Secretary, Mr. E. M. Forster and perhaps one or two others were expected to attend the Conference. Delegates were likewise expected from France, from China, from America. In order to make the Conference truly representa-



tive of Indian literature and thought in our century, the various Universities in India and leading literary associations were invited by the Executive Committee to send their delegates to Jaipur.

An appeal for funds was made, and although in the beginning the response was anything but encouraging, the position changed when, as the date of the Conference approached, liberal donations came forth and a sum rather more than had been asked for was collected. For having made the Conference possible—for having made it possible for the Executive Committee to meet so fully and adequately the demands made upon it—our thanks are due to the many donors, beginning with H. E. H. The Nizam of Hyderabad who donated a princely sum, whose names are printed at the end of the book.

And so the "stage was set" for the Jaipur Conference. The many men and women from all parts of India—and indeed the ends of the world—who converged towards Jaipur carried with them a sense of adventure, a desire for discovery, a hope for the future. The editorial note in *The Indian P.E.N.* for October 1945 rightly exhorted its readers and the prospective delegates to the Jaipur Conference to strive to bring about what "our first great international P.E.N. President, Mr. John Galsworthy, defined as the end of our efforts":

a wild and genial air to breathe. We writers of the P.E.N. want to serve humanity at large in the ways (perhaps the only ways) in which the written word and the makers thereof can serve humanity—by linking up country by country the love of literature, and by helping to restore to a bleak and starved world a friendly atmosphere.

How apt and poignant were Galsworthy's words in 1945, although first spoken in Hungary thirteen years earlier!

Meanwhile, at the Jaipur end, the energetic Reception Committee—with Prof. J. C. Rollo as Chairman and Mr. K. Iswara Dutt as Secretary—was "leaving no stone unturned" to make the forthcoming Conference an unqualified success. And Sir Mirza Ismail, of course, attended—he *would* attend—to the minutest details of the reception of the delegates, their boarding and lodging, their conveyance to and from the Conference Hall, their excursions and entertainments. There

had been annual gatherings in India before, bringing together the writers in particular linguistic areas, and there had been similar gatherings of students and teachers of history or philosophy or economics. But a literary conference on an all-India basis was a new thing, and was instinct with great possibilities.

Moreover, the Jaipur Conference was the first important cultural gathering held anywhere immediately after the long-awaited and much-delayed conclusion of World War II. During the terrible war years humanity had witnessed the crash—or seeming final crash—of its most cherished ideals. Love, good-will and mutual trust had been crushed, hate, greed and mutual suspicion had played havoc with the destinies of millions of innocent men, women and children. Human values had been treated as a thing of naught and the "eternal verities" had been all but given their *congé*. Now at last, in the calmer and cooler atmosphere of Jaipur, it would be possible—or so we thought—to take stock of things, to lick the wounds that the human spirit had sustained in the course of the war years, and to affirm that first things must ever be first, that economic values were not the whole of life—not even the dominant partner of life—and that the soul of man was, is, and ever must be free. There, too, was an excellent opportunity for emphasising the cardinal unity of Indian culture, notwithstanding the many languages and literatures that flourish in our midst.

### THREE FRUITFUL DAYS

And so we met at Jaipur on 20th October 1945—met as writers on whom lay certain heavy responsibilities, met (so it seemed) with identical hopes and aspirations. The beautiful pink city of Jaipur—mediæval in its store of memories and romantic associations but modern in its lay-out, its finish, its amenities—was agog with excitement from the 20th to the 22nd October, and many personalities were seen, and many speeches were heard.

The Conference met on the opening day at 9 a.m. in the spacious Sawai Man Singh Town Hall. The delegates (nearly a hundred and fifty of them) and Jaipur's interested citizens together made a notable and colourful gathering.

Grave and suave, 'Sir Mirza Saif' prominently on the dais, ready to inaugurate the Conference. There was Shrimati Sarojini Naidu, all vivacity and good humour, properly installed in the presidential chair. There was Jawaharlal Nehru, moving about with leonine majesty and grace, smiling and whispering with charming ease, signing autographs with cheerful unconcern. There was Professor Radhakrishnan, the lean man with the big white turban, quite obviously the man of "words and wisdom." There was Shrimati Sophia Wadia, the organising genius behind the P.E.N. movement in India—beaming with satisfaction and making plans for the future. There were others too—the serious and stolid N. C. Mehta, the slim, debonaire Minoo Masani, the colourful Bharati Sarabhai; Dr. Mulk Raj Anand, talking and smoking all the time, that torrential fountain of good humour, Mr. A. S. P. Ayyar, "Masti," "Mama" Waverkar, Hafiz, Lalchand Jagtiani, K. S. Venkataramani, Kshuti Mohan Sen, and several others who had all made their mark as writers of distinction and whom it was a pleasure and a privilege to meet. There were, besides, the English delegates—Hermon Ould and E. M. Forster and there were Polish, American and French delegates.

The programme before the Conference was in all conscience a very heavy one. From 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. with a brief intermission in between, and again, after lunch, from 2-30 p.m. to 5 p.m., with another brief intermission—thus was the daily programme. In addition to the symposium on the modern Indian literatures—in which no less than sixteen speakers, representing sixteen languages, participated—there was a variety of lectures, discussions, and addresses, as also recitations in French and Hindusthani. The Symposium has been separately brought out under the editorship of Dr. Bharatan Kumarappa<sup>1</sup>. For the rest, the proceedings of the Conference are set out in this volume as faithfully as possible<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> *The Indian Literatures of Today: A Symposium* (The International Book House Ltd., Bombay 1 Rs. 5/-)

<sup>2</sup> To bring the message of the Conference to as many as possible, this Introduction has been published by the International Book House, Ltd. Ash Lane, Bombay 1, as a pamphlet, *Jairpur*, '45—*A Milestone for Indian Letters* (Annex 3)

The stenographers' reports of the extempore speeches were often unreliable in the extreme, and it has been a job to reconstruct the original from the garbled reports. Many of Shrimati Sarojini Naidu's brilliant asides and parenthetical flashes, for example, are totally lost, and the reported speech is thus not quite the fascinating iridescent wonder that the presidential address was. I nevertheless hope that the "Proceedings" in the present form will be found a reliable and readable record of the Jaipur Conference.

The Conference was, no doubt, the main thing, but it did not exclude other activities. The elaborate and punctilious arrangements for residence were such that it was possible for delegates to come together whenever they liked and establish contacts. At the Maharaja's party, at the Prime Minister's party, and again at the party given by Mr. Kamani, one of the leading industrialists of Jaipur, the delegates breathed a friendly and genial air—and many old friendships were renewed and many new ones were made. Writers from Bengal and Karnatak, from Tamil Nad and Andhra Desa, from Gujarat and Maharashtra, writers in English and writers in the modern Indian languages, old and young writers, Hindu and Muslim writers,—meeting as writers, exchanging confidences, sharing hopes, fighting despair, they all had a feeling of kinship and felt convinced that the Conference had done much good to them all by promoting this understanding between them.

The evenings and the mornings were set apart for excursions. A whole rich evening at Amber with its courts and mirrors and hanging gardens and ineffable silences—an hour or so at the Observatory—an adventure of discovery to the Hawa Mahal, the wonder palace of the Winds—a round of visits, covering the Maharaja's College, the Albert Hall and Museum, and the Mubarak Mahal—and, perhaps, a visit to the bazaar where Jaipur *saris* and Jaipur ornamented vases captured your eye and emptied your purse,—and back again to your tent, to rest for the night, and be ready for tomorrow's programme!

When the detailed programme of the three-day Conference was placed in the hands of the delegates and other visitors, many of them must have been nearly overwhelmed

by the first impression of the too heavy 'diet of lectures and discussions that seemed to lie ahead of them. The organizers of the Conference had certainly gathered their speakers with a wide and audacious net, and the names that figured on the programme included some of the most notable intellects in the worlds of Indian literature, philosophy, politics, history, art, law and scholarship, with a sprinkling of well-known English writers. The subjects too embraced every aspect of literature—literature in general—Indian literature—and the various regional literatures—English literature between the wars—the future of English in India—an appreciation of Tagore—a discussion on copyright—a plea for an all-India encyclopædia—international understanding through literature—and so on.

Considering the composition of the Conference, the sceptic might have been justified if he had prognosticated but difference and division—at best only a scattered and diversified display of verbal fireworks—as the only probable result of the Conference. But happily things turned out otherwise. Sir Mirza's opening address, serious and statesmanlike, exhorted writers to abandon their ivory towers and take their part in the rebuilding of the world in terms of the wildest idealism. Mrs. Sarojini Naidu's presidential address that followed,—a feast of splendid improvisation that kept the whole audience thrilled and fascinated,—subtly and surely, yet unmistakably and memorably, insinuated the general scope of the Conference as also the deep abiding truths that should go out from the Conference to the outside world. Not that we quite realised then, as wave upon wave the sentiments and thoughts surged and subsided, following the sinuous movements of Mrs. Naidu's speech,—the singular comprehensiveness of her apparently casual address, and its abiding quality. But in the discussions that followed, in the addresses that were given, the speakers seemed only to pick up an item here and an item there from Mrs. Naidu's speech and amplify them in their own several ways.

Unity, of course, was the main theme of the Conference—unity in diversity, unity triumphant over disunity. Division and disunity and variety and diversity were there—they are there still—but we need not therefore infer an utter chaos

in our affairs. The past and the future—they had their respective pulls, no doubt, but both gained significance only in terms of the present. The traditionalists and the futurists could thus join hands in the co-operative adventure of our civilization. As Sophia Wadia pointed out in her concluding address,

“The past and the future, whether we know it or not, whether we realize it or not, are present here in each one of us, and it is in the present that there is that unification of the past and future.”

Similarly, however the idealist and the realist might wrangle academically, there was a platform where they could come together to strive for the good and beautiful life and also for sane and healthy living. The antithesis between the older and the younger generation was likewise seen to be a superficial and deceptive thing, and all that was needed was that everyone should seek to plumb each the depths of his or her own consciousness, and then surely all would realize that they had the same essential aspirations and the same ineradicable thirst to realize the Truth. There were, then, the many languages and literatures in our midst. Did they not promote disunity? Were they not a visible proof of the peoples of India being at cross-purposes? Were they not a prelude to the division and disintegration of India?

This indeed was the crux of the problem. Where was “Indian Literature” as a recognizable entity if at the same time there were also fifteen or more major modern Indian literatures, one and all of them very much alive and kicking? Did not, then, the development of Bengali, Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Gujarati, Marathi, Kannada, and the rest give rise inevitably to strong local attachments, impairing thereby our common allegiance to Mother India as a whole? Mrs Naidu, however, strong in her intuitions, had no doubts at all in the matter and declared—

“India is one and indivisible. While her children speak with many tongues, they only speak with one, undivided heart. This I will assert over and over again, because it so happens that however different the languages are, and however differently derived and differently sustained and expanded and enriched, the basic thought underlying every language, the one common unifying thought, ideal and focus has been the mythology of India, the ancient lore of India, the ancient songs of India, and they extend from the banks of the Brahmaputra to Cape Comorin.”

Others reiterated the same conviction, though in different words "The various literatures in India," said Mr Gurdial Mallik, "are like the workers in a vineyard, owned by a single proprietor," and he ended his talk with an apt quotation from a mediæval mystic

"There may be different kinds of oil in different lamps, the wicks may also be of different kinds, but when they burn, we have the same flame and illumination "

Mr Masti Venkatesa Iyengar compared Indian literature to an orchestra to which each of the regional literatures contributed its own characteristic note But similes and metaphors, however arresting and however apt in this particular context, yet needed to be buttressed by argument and also by a programme for the future In the circumstances, the discussion on "The Development of the Indian Literatures as a Uniting Force," initiated on the afternoon of the first day, occupied a key position in the Conference Cultural unity there had been, and in spite of appearances to the contrary, the unity was still there—perhaps a bit obscured now and then, perhaps obstinately uncountenanced by scattered groups, but certainly the unity was there, for one sensed its presence and knew it was there On the other hand, the development of the regional literatures, a very desirable and necessary thing, tended inevitably to disrupt that agelong unity by slow unperceived gradations Steps had, therefore, to be taken to see that the avalanching growth of the regional literatures did not by the very process smother and destroy the basic unity of India, the unity of Indian culture and literature

Various suggestions were put forward in the course of the three days of the Conference Sardar K M Panikkar, initiating on the second day the desirability of an All-India Encyclopædia, urged that the publication of the encyclopædia of his conception—"a common body of thought definitely Indian in the sense that the majority of Indians share it... , while conserving what is of value in the new"—could "re-achieve the unity of Indian thought" that seemed to be in jeopardy owing to the development of the provincial literatures and cultures Dr. Kunhan Raja and others thought that every Indian should learn some modern Indian languages

other than his own. Some thought that interplay and circulation of thought in the modern Indian literatures should be promoted in various ways—especially by means of translations of the classics of yesterday and today from one Indian language into another by people who know both intimately. The Hindi-Urdu controversy and the question of a national language for India were referred to by some of the speakers, including Pandit Nehru, and the consensus of opinion was that literature should be freed from undue interference by party politics. Dr. Radhakumud Mookerji and Sardar M. V. Kibelfelt that continuity and unity could be maintained if the modern literatures reared themselves on the abiding foundations of the ancient Indian literatures. The fact must be faced, as Dr. Dustoor pointed out, that the development of the modern Indian literatures “does not itself make for unification.”

And yet, with vision and determination, the Indian writers of today and tomorrow can cultivate their respective literatures as a tremendous force for unity and harmony. For one thing, writers all over India can render the heart-beats of the children of the soil and present Indian life in its broad human, rather than its narrow, local context. For another, writers can take their cue from Mr. M. Ruthnaswami and attempt a projection of India—the whole of India—in their works. Above all, if an integral national leadership is forthcoming, literature, too, will hymn the notes of unity and harmony. And if the recent past is any reliable augury of the future, we need not altogether despair.

If India sought unity within, she sought, no less earnestly and no less urgently, understanding with the outside world. Isolation was an unthinkable proposition in the era of the atomic bomb. And literature could promote international understanding, and such understanding would be a human understanding, and, therefore, a lasting understanding. Mrs. Gertrude Sen's learned paper on “The Popularization of the Indian Literatures Outside India” led to a very fruitful discussion and it was generally agreed that the Indian classics should be made available to foreigners in reliable translations in English and perhaps in some other European languages as well. Sir Rustom Masani's paper on “Fellowship of Learn-



ing and International Intellectual Co-operation " tackled the same problem, though from a somewhat different angle

But this traffic in international culture had necessarily to be a two-way traffic India had to give as well as to receive This brought us to the question of the future of English in India Accident and historic necessity compelled the Indians of three or four generations ago to learn English—the language as well as the literature Willy-nilly, English assumed for a time the status of a common national language for India It is still the language of higher education in the country Some of the choicest spirits in India have wielded English as an efficient medium of prose and verse expression It has long been, to us, as it seems likely to remain for some time to come, the sole key that we have to the many-chambered mansion of modern knowledge But the regional languages must be given every facility and every inducement to develop, to enrich their vocabularies, to become really and truly modern English will no more have its present weightage in the school and college curriculum It will be shown its place,—but it will continue to have an important place in our scheme of studies As a great literature, as a key to modern knowledge, as a means of international commerce and understanding, English will have to secure a place of stable equilibrium in future India All this is very closely and finely argued out in Sir Bomanji Wadia's paper on "The Indispensability of English to Indian Culture "

The discussion on copyright arose out of Sir Maurice Gwyer's learned paper on the Indian Copyright Law Writers generally, and poets in particular, left to themselves, may be inclined to feed on honeydew and drink the milk of Paradise, but hunger is paramount and even a poet's wife and children have elementary human needs Piracy in publishing is practised on a large scale in our country, and Mr. Masani, who moved the resolution, Professor Menezes who seconded it, and the whole house which carried it, thought that something must be done to see that the writer was not cheated out of his rights

It is not necessary to refer here to the other addresses and papers—except to indicate the amazing comprehensiveness of the three-day intellectual treat Not all the papers

submitted to the Conference could be read, or read in their entirety. But all the papers are here printed in full. Professor Radhakrishnan's address on "Moral Values in Literature" kept the audience spell-bound for thirty minutes, and verily we thought that we were being carried to the haven of inexpressible Fulfilment on the flood-tide of his eloquence. On the last day, Mr. N. C. Mehta, who has made a lifelong study of Indian Art gave a most instructive discourse on æsthetic values in literature. Mr. D. V. Gundappa's paper on "Conditions of Freedom in Literature" and Prof. Humayun Kabir's paper on "Freedom and Creative Imagination" are thoughtful and stimulating essays which will interest all writers in our country. Dr. Menon's paper on "Power Without Responsibility" is a cogent piece of reasoning and has a peculiar relevance for us today. For the rest, there were instructive addresses on Tagore (Dr. Anand), on "The Urdu Writer of Today" (Professor Bokhari), on "English Literature between the Wars" (Mr. Forster) and on "The Philosophical Basis of Toleration" (Prof. Kshiti Mohan Sen). Varied as were the topics, the Conference never for a second lost sight of the essentials. The diverse interests could not be ignored, but the one fundamental fact of triumphant unity was not forgotten. Through tolerance and understanding, through mutual sympathy and love, a new synthesis, a new integration, had to be achieved, and then indeed Indian culture would be both variegated in its richness and splendid in its transcendent unity, beauty and harmony. This was the dream and the vision that the delegates and visitors carried with them from Jaipur—and this is the dream and the vision we have now to translate into reality.

K. R. SRINIVASA IYENGAR

*Waltair, 3rd August, 1947.*



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## **PART I**

**FIRST DAY : Saturday, 20th October 1945**





Morning Session: 9 a m.

## INAUGURAL ADDRESS

SIR MIRZA ISMAIL .

Mrs. Sarojmi Naidu, Mrs. Sophia Wadia, Ladies and Gentlemen.—

This is a day of rejoicing in the State of Jaipur, when we welcome to our midst so many eminent representatives of the intellectual and artistic life of our country, who will take counsel here with one another, and with our honoured guests from abroad, regarding the future of the literatures of India.

Most of you, I am sure, are well aware of the history of the International P. E. N. Club, from its founding in England in the year 1921, with John Galsworthy as its first President. Very quickly it asserted its genuinely international quality, and before the war there were branches in about forty countries. Every year they used to meet in an international congress of incalculable value both in the literary sphere and beyond it. It had been arranged that in 1940 the first of these international congresses in India should take place in Mysore, but the war prevented this. Let us hope that very soon this long-cherished desire of meeting in India may be fulfilled. In the meantime, the All-India Writers' Conference, organised by the India Centre of P. E. N., prepares the way, and has work of its own to do.

This Indian branch has been in existence for twelve years, and has become both representative and influential. Both its energy and the quality of its work are due mainly to the discriminating care of Mrs. Sophia Wadia, who was its founder. When she looks round upon this gathering, she must feel very happy, but not yet satisfied. For the Indian P. E. N. needs still greater support, that it may serve still more widely both literature and writers, and its permanent strengthening is one of the chief purposes of this conference.

It is an inestimable privilege to have, as guest in Jaipur, and as President of the Conference, Mrs Sarojini Naidu. No one who ever lived has been more truly possessed and enchanted by the love of beauty; and no Indian poet has ever so enriched the lyric music of the English tongue—while yet every memory and feeling and image comes from the very heart of her beloved native land. She will inspire the conference, but she will also lead it, and in its practical planning it will rely upon her experience and judgment.

The conference will be concerned very largely with the present and future of Indian literatures, and will bring about, let us hope, a much enlarged mutual understanding and appreciation, and a growing sense of unity. This idea not merely of Indian harmony but of Indian unity, and that in a most positive and dynamic sense, is my favourite theme. And whereas most of the forces working around us are of sadly centrifugal quality, yet the deeper we go, and the nearer we get to the heart of India, the less pessimistic must we feel. When political, social, economic, even religious forces seem determined more and more to alienate the Indian peoples from each other, we may turn in despair—but should I not rather say, in faith?—to that intense experience of truth and beauty that gives life, and universality to true literature. The poet's legislation is not for his own land alone, still less for his own company. He knows the larger air. Poets unfortunately are few in our day, and almost all are distressingly minor, but one need not be a poet in creative act so long as in vision and in clear liberty of spirit one is the poet's kindred. It should be the character of an assembly like this that it cares most for the life, least for, in any sense, the wherewithal.

We cannot without meanness of spirit think in these days of our land alone. That is not the way of the P E N, the eager generosity which has been its very life from the beginning and which has been busied incessantly in the subtle, difficult matter of mutual understanding. This effort has been desperately needed by the whole world, but never so desperately as now.

This is the generation, we are the men and women, upon whom the ends of the world are come. We dare not meet

them with an enigmatic smile. All history is, in St. Paul's words, "written for our admonition." Yet all history presents no remotest parallel or guide in the crisis of mankind today. There is the most authoritative scientific opinion that against the new atomic power of destruction, there is not, and can never be, any scientific protection. And further, there is not, and there can never be, any protection in international arrangements based on the adjustment of conflicting interests, or in such agreements as to weapons and materials as may at any moment be violated by some new or old aggressor. And indeed we seem to be further removed even from international promise, not to speak of fulfilment, than at any time in history. The very meaning of "tragedy" is deepened and darkened today beyond any act of history, beyond any conception of Sophocles or Shakespeare. There remains only the last appeal, which if made vainly now can never again be made—the appeal to the spirit of man. The only power on earth that can save us is the general will, the good and resolute will of an enlightened mankind. Never yet in history has an effective appeal to that world-wide will been made. Its power is actually as untried, as unknown, as till yesterday was that of the split atom, and it will be found, can we but attain it, to be mightier still, more dominant to save and bless than is the atom to destroy. There is no hope unless all nations now desire and endeavour to translate into active policy the very wildest idealism. The first difficulty is that, despite all that has been said and written, men do not yet *realise* the swift approach of doom, if they did, they would rush to agree. Alas that we have left till so late the practice of conciliation, of which appeasement is the distorted shadow. We have never sought even to understand each other's needs. And now in an instant the scene is changed, and of eternal time but a few seconds remain for our salvation. And we in India, who by virtue of our heritage should be torchbearers, have no conception of this dire necessity, even in its application to our own country. We are lost in the fatuity of recrimination.

At such a time the ivory towers of literature are seen, in the red glow of doomsday, to be both rickety and tawdry structures. I am sure that the distinguished literary men and

women who are gathered here fully realise that, for this time at least, they must concern themselves with the affairs of the time, with the mood and spirit and purpose of the time. They are rich, they are debtors, they must give all they have and are. Needless to say. I do not mean that they should become politicians. They must keep themselves untouched by the spiritual paralysis of politics. Theirs is a far higher order of vision and of service.

We all rejoice greatly, I am sure, in our association here with our guests and friends from foreign lands, few but personally distinguished, and at the same time representative, and each one of them animated by a thoughtful and cordial understanding of our people and their expression of India in literature. In the communication of peoples, in the truest sense, none of the arts is so serviceable as literature. Apart from personal intimacy, which also, I am sure, will flourish here, literature,—even if sometimes in translation, is certainly the chief means of understanding between East and West—for example, between those most natural friends and partners, England and India. And it is used on the highest level, being the expression of the finest and most sensitive minds. Our foreign guests, as I have said, are few, but fortunately each has influence in his own country, and will help it, on his return, to understand ours better. They must never lose touch with us and I hope they will do all they can, even in these days of so limited travel, to bring others of their countrymen in close touch with us, by letter if no more. It is sad when we are welcoming a very distinguished delegate of France to realise how limited, in its pure Englishness, has been the Western influence upon our culture. And how much more must we seek to learn of Chinese thought and art than can ever be told us, in the brief unoccupied periods of these three days, by the illustrious representatives of that neighbour land whose destiny must inevitably be closely linked with ours.

Again, may I say how happy we are in the presence of all of you and how anxious that your efforts may have solid success, and that in every way your visit may be an episode which will be recalled with pleasure.

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## MESSAGES

MR J C. ROLLO ·

The following message has been received from His Highness the Maharaja of Jaipur

“I am very glad to welcome to Jaipur the members of the P.E N , the other delegates to this Conference and the many visitors who have been attracted by its exceptional interest and importance. I trust that its purpose will be amply fulfilled, through the consultations of so many distinguished exponents, both Indian and foreign, of the literary arts, and that the renaissance of many Indian literatures may be both furthered and wisely directed by your friendly discussion here I hope too that the days of your visit may be exceedingly pleasant to all of you, and that you will take with you the happiest memories of this place ”

Another message, from His Highness the Maharaja of Indore, has been received

“I wish godspeed to the deliberations of the First All-India Writers' Conference being held at Jaipur under the auspices of the P.E N All-India Centre, and trust that this meeting will make further notable contribution to the intellectual advancement of our country, so much needed, among other things, at the present moment ”

Ladies and Gentlemen —

Having listened to His Highness's message and Sir Mirza's address, no one can be in any doubt as to the warmth of Jaipur's welcome. It is quite unnecessary to deliver an address upon this subject, and we shall therefore pass straight on to the messages that are to be read by Prof. Altekar.

PROF M D. ALTEKAR

Madam President, Ladies and Gentlemen :—

In the first place, I regret to say that Sir Maurice Gwyer and Sir Rustom Masani have been unfortunately prevented from being here They intended to come, but they could not come Many messages have been received wishing godspeed to the Conference, but I shall read only a few of them and read also the names of the persons who have sent the others.

The following message is from the American Centre of the P E N , and is signed by its Executive Secretary, Jane Hudson

"With all best wishes to the All-India Centre for the greatest success of this most important event on behalf of Carl Carmer and the American Centre as well as myself "

And this is from the Egyptian Centre at Cairo, signed by M A Enan

"I am sorry to say that it is almost impossible for any one of us to be in India at the time of the Jaipur Conference May I seize this opportunity to express on behalf of the writers of Egypt our best wishes for the success of the Conference "

And this from the Paris Centre, signed by Henri Membéré, General Secretary, Maison Internationale des P. E N Clubs

"We have just heard that on your side you are making a beginning of this new period by organising a great Conference of the writers of India We wish to you full success in your important task and we should like to be told, at least briefly, about your deliberations and your decisions In any case, kindly convey to the Conference all the wishes we are formulating for the success of its labours "

Messages have also been received from the following :—

Sir C P Ramaswami Aiyar ( Trivandrum )

Mr H C Baral ( Bombay )

Prof N. K Bhagwat ( Bombay )

Dr Bhabani Bhattacharya ( Nagpur )

Mr Buddhadeva Bose ( Calcutta )

Mr K Chandrasekharan ( Madras )

Dr Bhagvan Das ( Benares )

Mr Govind Das ( Jubbulpore )

Dr Nabagopal Das ( Calcutta )

Mr R R Diwakar ( Hubli )

Prof N. Gangulee ( London )

Prof P K Gode ( Poona )

Mr R E Hawkins ( Bombay )

Prof R V Jagirdar ( Dharwar )

Dewan Bahadur H L Kaji ( Bombay )

- Mr. Chhotalal M. Kamdar ( Vankaner, Kathiawar )  
 Rajkumari Amrit Kaur ( Poona )  
 Mr. M. Fathulla Khan ( Hyderabad-Deccan )  
 Sir Rustom Masani ( Bombay )  
 Prof A. V. Matthew ( Kolhapur )  
 Sir Chunilal B. Mehta ( Bombay )  
 Dr. D. P. Mukerjee ( Lucknow )  
 Dr Radhakamal Mukerjee ( Gwalior )  
 Mr. K. M. Munshi ( Bombay )  
 Prof P. S. Naidu ( Allahabad )  
 Mr Jamil Naqvi ( Asst. Secretary, Indian Library Association )  
 Mr. Ananta Prasad Panda ( Cuttack )  
 The Maharaja of Poibandar  
 Prof. P. Ramanathan ( Trichur )  
 Mr. Nicholas Roerich  
 Dr. K. G. Saigadam ( Rampur State )  
 Mr. M. C. Samaddar ( Patna )  
 Mr. Somnath Hotru Sarma ( Bolangir )  
 Dewan Bahadur K. S. Ramaswami Sastri ( Madras )  
 Srimati K. Savitri Ammal ( Madras )  
 Principal H. K. Sherwani ( Hyderabad-Deccan )  
 Principal B. M. Srikantia ( Dharwar )  
 Dr Lakshman Swarup ( Lahore )  
 Messrs. Thacker & Co., Bombay  
 Mr. Edward Thompson  
 Srimati Umadevi ( Representative of the Polish P. E. N. for India, Bombay )  
 Mr. Kamalakanta Verma ( Hindustani Academy, Allahabad )  
 Mr. S. N. Vyas ( Editor, *Vikram* )  
 Sir Bomanji Wadia ( Bombay )  
 Mrs. Phiroze Wadia ( Bombay )  
 Mr. G. Yazdani ( Hyderabad-Deccan )
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## PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS\*

MRS SAROJINI NAIDU

Sir Mirza Ismail, Mr. Hermon Ould, my brother and sister delegates from abroad, delegates, and those of you who are not writers but "kindred" to the poets as Sir Mirza has rightly said.—

I am gripped with nervousness, believe it or not,—and Pandit Nehru will tell you that he offered to help me out for some time. I feel that on this occasion—when, as it has been said in the message from France, we in India are taking the initiative towards this new world that we are going to construct—my great friend, Rabindranath Tagore, our national poet of international fame, should have been alive. He was the priest of the temple, I but a humble door-keeper of this house of learning, but since destiny has raised me to be his successor, however unworthy, I want you to remember that it is he, his spirit and his genius, that is really presiding today, and that I am only acting as a substitute in his place.

Before I begin to say a few disjointed words that might come into my head, I would like to do a daring feat by inventing a message that has not been given to me, but which I think I am authorized to give,—and I am now taking the liberty of giving it. One who by every right has an eminent, if not a pre-eminent, place in the world of letters, as a writer, as a teacher, as a journalist, as a prophet of a new world of human fellowship based on peace,—my great leader Mahatma Gandhi—has given me free permission, knowing that I would not misinterpret him, however much I would like to, to give you a message. Such a message from him for such an occasion was a great burden to me, and I pass on the burden to you. You must be bold enough to give the message to the world, and that is the function of this Writers' Conference. And so I will deliver to you Mahatma Gandhi's message. "Let every man be the exponent and the embodiment of this great ideal of world peace, of which writers are laying the foundation." I have also received a telegram from the President of the Indian National Congress, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, an eminent writer himself. "I

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\* Delivered extempore

send my greetings to intellectuals and writers, Indian and foreign, who have assembled to co-operate in the world of letters. They are pioneers for freedom of spirit, and their endeavours should always be directed to the good of humanity. Regret ill-health prevents my attending the Conference in person, but I am with you in spirit and wish your Conference every success. "

When I was in the United States many years ago, there was a very great Syrian poet alive, Maulana Kahlil Gibran. He was an Arab, but he wrote in English, and in much better English than most of us who are not Englishmen, and many of us who are English writers. He presided at a welcome to me by Americans, and he then quoted a most lovely Arabic saying which means "Poets are the foundation on which God builds His mansion." Although all of us may not be poets, we are writers—and everyone who writes a noble thought is creative in the literary sense.

Two days running before I left for Jaipur, I was certainly preparing unconsciously for this great ordeal. On one afternoon, old as I am and perhaps demented as you see I am, I was asked to inaugurate the session of the Conference of the Young Progressive Urdu Writers. And, the next day, I fulfilled another function equally important, and that was to inaugurate the Premchand Academy, which is going to be a great power in this country. Premchand fulfilled in his life, not mortally but in an immortal fashion, what everyone desires the world over reconciliation. Pushing aside the beastly controversy now going on about our two living, growing, important national tongues, he wrote with equal beauty, equal inspiration, works in Hindi and Urdu, which are going to be the two great mother-tongues of this great land. So you see I have come in a mood of ecstasy, I might say, to this Conference of writers.

Sir Mirza Ismail has spoken with undue pessimism which I am not going to admire—I admire his sentiment but not his pessimism!—about the world being on the brink of a precipice. He said that there was almost no hope for the world "unless all nations now desire and endeavour to translate into active policy the very wildest idealism." He hoped that this Conference would make a lasting contribution towards the

elimination of the means and needs of national and international conflicts. It may be a great lag in my nature, but it will always be impossible for me to be pessimistic. I have never found it possible to believe that the future will not be infinitely more glorious than the past. I do not believe that the world with its keynote of civilization is dead, that humanity has been altogether betrayed. Therefore, in a mood of hope, I welcome to this Conference all the delegates from abroad.

From Great Britain, only Mr Hermon Ould and Mr Forster have been able to come. I am glad that, in spite of every difficulty and discouragement, Mr. Forster *was* able to obtain 'a passage to India,' his great novel proving prophetic in this respect! Of course, we have not yet stabilized the world, we have not quite done with the difficulties of the old world. We have, however, been able to get messages from other English writers, who can only come to us in their spirit and not in their body. I am very hopeful that Mr. Ould and Mr Forster will have, and give us, a profitable time.

And there is a Polish lady, whose name I am going to try to say, Mrs Duszynska. She comes as a representative of the Polish nation in the place of the lady who calls herself Umadevi, but remains a Pole at heart and loves her country and its ideals. Mrs Duszynska is certainly most welcome to this Conference.

The two Chinese delegates\* who were expected to come, could not come, perhaps for want of passage to India. It is not their coming that matters so much, but we welcome, we heartily welcome the spirit of China that is with us today. As Sir Mirza said, these two countries, China and India, have their destinies "closely linked," inevitably interlinked for the future as they were interlinked in the past. We sent to them once upon a time the greatest gift that one nation has ever given to another we sent to China the message of Gautama Buddha, and therefore we cannot be alienated from one another, no matter what the circumstances may be.

We welcome my old friend, Mr. Ralph Block, who has been here as Head of War Information, and who is also a

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\* Prof. Lowe Kie-Jie and Prof. Tang Tung Mei

forceful writer We welcome him from New York, that great city that neither sleeps nor lets another sleep.

From France, we have more than a message. We have Dr. Lacombe,—and we are very glad to welcome you from that great France which has been the centre of civilization, of culture, of great and progressive thought, of great science, great literature, and great laws of freedom We all hope that a great and new France will arise from the ashes of the old France

In Jaipur, this romantic city of the Rajputs, I think that those who have eyes and ears can still see and hear of old Rajput chivalry, Rajput history, of the kings of that noble race,—and it is but right that we writers should begin a new tradition in this land of old traditions, in such a historic city. We are very grateful to Sir Mirza Ismail, for it is because he happens to be the Dewan of Jaipur today that we are here Had he been in Mysore, we would have been in Mysore today Here we should realise what old poetry can do in the land of the Rajputs One remembers—one cannot forget—that here life has been an inspiration of the poets On the eve of great wars, it was the ballad singers that reminded chieftains and kings of their duty We are told again that it was the ballad singers that reminded the queens that they were *satis*, that their honour was in their own keeping, that they were the mothers of the race, and therefore nothing of weakness should enter into their action and their thought And it is this inspiration that I want writers to take away from here

This is the first time as far as my limited knowledge goes—in the history of modern India, at any rate—that an attempt has been made to gather the representatives of all the languages together, of the living languages vibrating new thoughts and new dreams to come, along with the ancient, immortal, perennial language of India, Sanskrit, whose representative in the form of a woman\* sits in that corner, one of the most recent writers of old Sanskrit, with a modern accent and modern thoughts.

Well may we ask ourselves: Why do we meet together? Is not every province, every linguistic area, sufficient unto

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\* Pandita Kshamabai Row.

itself, where every writer is able to command millions of his own countrymen and countrywomen for the literature that he produces in his own time? Are the literatures of India not manifold, each the mirror of the life of its own people? Why, then, we ask, should Indian writers all meet together in a Conference? Why?—because India is one and indivisible. While her children speak with many tongues, they can only speak with one, undivided heart. This I will assert over and over again, because it so happens that however different the languages are, and however differently derived and differently sustained and expanded and enriched, the basic thought underlying every language, the one common unifying thought, ideal and focus has been the mythology of India, the ancient lore of India, the ancient songs of India, and they extend from the banks of the Brahmaputra to Cape Comorin. You will find that the gods and goddesses, the kings and queens, loved one another and destroyed one another, permeated the whole of India from point to point, because India was one, geographically one, psychologically one, spiritually one and politically one also. So long we have been ignorant of one another, except some like me who journey constantly hither and thither. But the truth is, the same spirit inspires the poet who writes in Malayalam, the one who writes in Bengali, a third who writes in Punjabi, a fourth in Gujarati, and another in Marathi. The various languages are the full-grown languages of highly civilised peoples. But men of learning in one province had little knowledge of the work done in other provinces. Therefore we are very grateful to Madame Sophia Wadia, who has become one of us, that she conceived the brave and difficult idea of organising an Indian Centre of the P. E. N., so that brothers of the pen, sisters of the pen, wielding their pens in different languages, may know something of the common spirit of the different languages and their literatures. Today we have over two hundred representatives of Indian languages present here, each making a great affirmation, the great affirmation that the spirit of India is one, the dream of India is one, the hope of India is one. There is no "spiritual paralysis" in any one of the tongues or limbs of India. We do not, after all, want a monotony of culture, we want rather

a culture of rich diversity, a full, rich diversity of culture, as different in its expressions from one another as is possible, yet converging at the essential, spiritual point into the one thought that is the heritage of India and will be the legacy of the India unborn.

Today we are meeting as *Indian* writers. All languages—Marathi, Gujarati, Sanskrit, Malayalam, English (good or bad), Punjabi, Urdu, Hindi,—all these and all the others are here represented. But why do we ask friends from abroad to come? Mr Forster and Mr Ould, Prof. Lacombe, our Chinese representatives, our Polish representative, our American representative, and other foreign representatives—why have we asked them to come to our Conference? What is there in common between us all? Have not the people in various countries been tearing one another to pieces, mutilating and destroying the world? Have they not flourished on bitterness and hatred during all these years?... But it is not the writers who have done that! We writers ought to wipe out bitterness and create a human fellowship in this wide and suffering world. That is why our friends have come from abroad to meet us here, realizing that it is the writers who are responsible for the peace and progress of the world that we shall build. We writers with our united strength, with a unity of vision, with a profound sense of the future, can build a common human fellowship. That is the hope and that is the mission of the writer today and tomorrow.

What is the art of literature? Why do we speak certain words or so many words? You can ask Sir S. Radhakrishnan why he talks so much. His profession is words. You can ask Pandit Nehru why he talks so much. His profession is words again. Here we have two Vice-Presidents,—one represents the philosophic side of words, the other represents the warrior attitude of words. Words are more powerful in their meaning, in their influence, than the swords of armies. Sir S. Radhakrishnan in his inimitable English style has created a new inspiration to those who hear him in Europe, in America, as well as in India. Radhakrishnan is really one of those people on whom rests the responsibility of giving to our ancestral philosophy as a means of practical wisdom for the

re-creation of the world On the other hand, Pandit Nehru is a man who excites multitudes by his words Let no one say he only talks. He is indeed infusing our people with the spirit of freedom and democracy

The writer's function, whether he is a poet, a novelist, an essayist or a playwright, is to imbibe thought that is creative, dynamic and inspiring For example, take Mr Masani, who wrote *Our India* You know *Our India*, the small book for children It contains more knowledge of India than can be contained in many volumes By that one little book Mr Masani has earned a very high place in the ranks of the P E N It is not the book that matters so much as the impression you make on the minds of children, and also of old ladies like me a new angle of vision about our country, not only how great it was, but also how great it is, and how poor it is, how sad it is, how oppressed it is, and how great and happy it can be

Therefore, friends who are here today, I want you not to think that words are a waste Words are the origin of all progress, peace and culture. Words are very important, and those of you who are not so modern as to abolish God from your minds, remember that even God depends on your words somewhat for peace and progress The function of the scholar is thus a sacrosanct function of humanity. The man of letters by his great mission has to transcend all barriers of race and creed and tradition He must create a new tradition, he must create a world-wide tradition, and today when science has made the world small, when time and space have been nearly eliminated, the writers must also seek to eliminate—not aggressively and in a barbarous way, but with vision and understanding—the barriers that still divide the world The sense of race must go The idea that rivers and mountains divide must be exceeded The sense of the limitations of one's own heritage must be demolished We are all equally inheritors of all the world's culture, because once a word has been uttered, once it has been issued in the air, it belongs no longer to any race or to any creed, but to the whole of humanity I hope you will all follow Sir Mirza's advice Give support to the cause of world peace, not with money but with your elementary understanding, with your love,





## THE INTERNATIONAL SECRETARY'S ADDRESS

MR. HERMON OULD:

Madam President, Ladies and Gentlemen —

It is first my pleasant duty to convey to you the many messages that friends in Britain have sent through me. There are warm messages of good-will from H. G. Wells, J. R. Ackerley, Rose Macaulay and Christopher Isherwood. Mr. Richard Church writes in the course of his letter to me

"...you, as our British representative, will have an opportunity to say how disappointed I am that I cannot be present, and how eagerly I wish that the purposes of the Conference may be fruitful at this critical stage in Anglo-Indian relationship. The development of the Indian literatures as a Uniting Force is an agendum whose importance cannot be too strongly emphasised today. We writers in England are watching events, and the spiritual significances behind those events, and I know that I can speak for many of us when I say that I wish the Conference godspeed."

Here is another message, from a young English writer, Mr. Dennis Gray Stoll

"Although I have never visited India, through books and music and the many good Indian friends whom I have been fortunate enough to make in England, I have conceived a deep regard for your people and civilisation, and an active sympathy with your aspirations."

"The attempt to understand your ancient cultural and religious traditions, and to realize your modern social and political needs, has broadened and enriched my own experience of life. As a writer I have tried to repay this debt to India in a way which I trust may be of some service."

"...To Madame Sophia Wadia, Mulk Raj Anand, and all fellow-members of the P. E. N., greetings, and thoughts of keen interest in the Conference."

"*Barde Mataram!*"

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\* Mr. Stoll has published two novels with Indian themes, *City of Chairs* and *The Dove Found No Rest*.

Miss Edith Sitwell has sent the following message to "my fellow-writers in India":

"I send them my greetings. I know that our task and our aim—even when they take a completely contrasted form—are the same. Like them, I live for, and live in hope of, a day when there may be a true brotherhood among mankind. My thoughts are with my fellow-writers in India, and I hope that when they can spare the time, they will sometimes, also, think of one who shares their aspirations. I hope, too, that we shall meet one day."

Miss Storm Jameson has also sent "a word of greeting" to this Conference.

"At any time this Conference would have been important, but at this moment it has a double importance. It witnesses to the essential unity of India, and it reaffirms the supremacy of the spirit and of spiritual values in a world which gives every sign of being about to collapse because it has trusted too blindly in material forces and material progress. I deeply regret that I could not share what must be, for all who take part in it, a moving experience and a source of strength for the future, and I pray for the success of the Conference."

Another eminent writer, Mr. Desmond MacCarthy, sends these "fraternal greetings":

"We in England know that by tradition and character no people in the world set a higher value on things of the mind than the peoples of India."

"Men of different nations are separated, not only by their selfish interests, but also, alas, by their hearts—their natural preferences, loyalties, and affections."

"Only on the plane of thought do they become aware of their common destiny. Very few indeed of us can hope that our own literary work is, or will be, of much consequence on that high level, but every effort of disinherited imagination or disinterested enquiry may be of some importance. The P. E. N. to which we belong recognises that fact, and is also an association designed to make it a little easier for writers in all countries to do their best work."

Here, finally, is a message from Lord Pethick-Lawrence, the Secretary of State for India

“Indian thought as expressed in its literature has played a deep part in my life and it is therefore with a special feeling of gratitude that I wish every success to the Conference of writers which the All-India P E N Centre has convened at Jaipur. The theme that has been chosen as the main subject of discussion—the development of the Indian literatures as a unifying force—is one of great importance. The fundamental cultural unity of India has always found expression in literature and the arts. Differences of language have been no impediment to the high achievements of Indian literature, and today there is nothing provincial in the outlook of literary India. Any worth-while book in any Indian language is certain to be translated into other Indian languages, just as Western writers from Plato to Ibsen and Tolstoy are being made known by translations in Indian languages. It is, I think, also true to say that India's men of letters have a great task before them in guiding the venturesome experiments in new literary form and the restless search for truth which is being manifested in the literatures of present-day India. May your deliberations be fruitful!”

So much for the messages from these distinguished British writers. Of one thing I am sure. They all envy me today, because I am able to greet you, not through the medium of post or special messenger, but face to face. You see before you a very ignorant person. I haven't even read you up in a book. I have often travelled in the same railway compartment, or on the same deck, with people who seem to know all about a country they are visiting for the first time, because they have read it all up in guide-books, in historical summaries, geographical surveys, and political discourses. I have seen these people sit with their noses in books, their eyes glued to pictures of the treasures they are hoping to see, while all the time the world has been spreading its treasures, the real thing, outside the railway-carriage window, or out at sea, and these they have passed with unseeing eyes.

My friends, I am not that sort of traveller. Perhaps, it is

because I am too lazy, perhaps, it is because I value too much the element of surprise; perhaps, it is because I do not wish my vision to be dulled by other travellers' tales. Whatever the reason, I come to you as one almost completely ignorant of your country. Of course, my mind has registered the usual stock of words and labels, and of course I know that when I get back to England I shall be expected to say what I think of the Taj Mahal, and the Caves, and the Burning Ghats, and the other sights reserved for sightseers, and of course I shall be able to pose as an authority on the Indian question. But here and now I am conscious only of my ignorance. I am not ignorant of your literature. I have read not a little of it, in translation of course, and I have had the advantage of the excellent *résumés* published by the Indian P. E. N. And as for your ancient scriptures, and particularly the *Bhagavad Gita*, that has been inherited by me as by the whole world. But that is about all the knowledge that I can claim, apart from an occasional glimpse, an entrancing glimpse, of Indian dancing in the inappropriate setting of an English theatre. But You, your country, are being seen by me for the first time. I bring a heart ready to be moved by you, a mind eager to respond to you, and eyes wide open to see anything your great old country can show me in the short period of two or three months. I greet you, then, and throw myself on your mercy.

### THE P E N — PAST AND FUTURE

It has been suggested to me that it would be appropriate if I said something today about the International P. E. N., its past, its present, and particularly its future. If what I have to say on the past is stale news to you, forgive me, I think it may not do any of us any harm to be reminded of what our organisation stands for and what we have done with our youth. We are no longer a child. We were born in 1921, and therefore came of age two years ago. When Mrs Dawson Scott founded the P. E. N., I think it was in response to a desire to do something, however modest, to counteract the misery and hate generated during the Great War of 1914-18. I don't suppose she imagined that the establishment of a club for writers would free the world from war; she went on the

principle that every little helps, and I think that she would be surprised if she could see how greatly her idea has been extended and expanded as the years have passed. All she wanted to do was to provide a vehicle for the simple virtues of friendliness and tolerance in a world starved for the lack of those virtues. You all know how quickly the idea spread, an indication in itself, surely, that the world was ready for it. The P E N was little more than a dining club at first, where writers entertained one another, showing friendliness and appreciation. But it differed from other such clubs in having from the first an international slant and casting a friendly eye on foreigners. It was this international aspect of the association which attracted our first President, John Galsworthy, and incidentally, the present speaker. Galsworthy was at that time one of the most widely read authors in the world, and he was able to speak with authority to a very wide audience to whom his name would be known. That was important. His astuteness and idealism—for he had no personal axe to grind—were a great asset. One after another the leading authors in England joined the parent body—Joseph Conrad, Thomas Hardy, H. G. Wells, Arnold Bennett, and so forth, and when steps were taken to create Centres in other countries very few insurmountable obstacles were found, until the poison of totalitarianism had begun to be injected. Paris, New York, Berlin, Brussels, Prague, Vienna, Warsaw, The Hague, Budapest, Madrid, Buenos Aires, Stockholm, and so on and, need I say, Bombay—all came within the scope of the P E N and when the Hitler War broke out in 1939 we numbered 60 centres, spread all over the world.

And how did this vast network of centres operate? In many and various ways, each centre having its own peculiarities, but all concerned with the fundamental principles of our association. We had an annual international congress—seventeen of them—always in a fresh capital, at which matters of interest to writers were discussed at great length, and where entertainment, hospitality, friendly intercourse between writers of many nationalities, were the order of the day. Don't let us claim too much. But don't let us claim too little, either. It would not be possible to say in so many

words what, in fact, the P. E. N. accomplished during the first twenty-one years of its life. One could point to a number of concrete things—publications, influence on laws affecting authorship, copyright, the banning of books, the free interchange of books across difficult frontiers, political prisoners. Not to mention the innumerable lectures, discussions, parties, conferences. But probably the most enduring work of the P. E. N. cannot even be indicated—it is imponderable, intangible. One cannot weigh friendship in the scales, or measure good-will with a yardstick. Our association has provided a medium for friendship; it has made communication wider and wider between writers of many lands; it has insisted always and unfailingly on the importance of personal relations between its members, and has never ceased to advocate freedom of expression in literature.

Now, this passion for freedom of expression has many times brought us to the very brink of hot water, and so far from cooling off, both our passion and the water seem to have grown hotter with the years. It was comparatively easy 20 years ago to proclaim one's belief in friendship and freedom. The only really important European country where freedom seemed to be regarded with disfavour was Fascist Italy. We had a centre—in fact we had two centres—in Italy, in Rome and Milan, but always one had the feeling that their tributes to freedom were only lip service. They made the motions of believing in freedom, but said nothing to the point when their rulers clapped their opponents in gaol. But Mussolini, unlike Hitler, wished to be regarded as a man of culture, was he not himself an author? So year after year, at international congress after international congress, when the cries of the victims of Fascist oppression were troubling the world's conscience, Signor Marinetti, the Futurist poet, the mouthpiece of Mussolini, would declare with emotion that in Italy there was complete intellectual freedom and that the Italian P. E. N. stood firm to its principles. We were, I think, too lenient to Marinetti and the Italian P. E. N. We adopted a policy of appeasement not unlike that which proved disastrous in the wider world of politics.

But with the Nazi régime there was never any bargaining. When the P. E. N. in Germany was *gleichgestellt*,

made to cut its coat according to the Nazi cloth; when German writers were expelled from the P E N in Berlin if they happened to be Jews, or Liberals, or Communists, or Socialists, or indeed anything but Nazis, then we knew that the time had come to act. The German P E N. was compelled to withdraw from an International association in which it no longer believed and whose principles it flouted.

When the lights went out in Europe, and afterwards throughout the greater part of the world, many P E N centres were among the first victims. This began, not in Austria, when that country was annexed by Germany, but in Spain, as we are too apt to forget. And one by one, as the European countries fell either to the invaders from without or the tyrants from within, P.E N centres were forcibly closed in Spain, in Austria, in Czechoslovakia, in Poland, in Belgium, Holland, Norway, Denmark, France. And synchronising with this came the stream of refugees that began to flow from all the oppressed peoples of Europe. It was the privilege of writers to be marked down for specially vindictive treatment by the tyrants, no doubt they recognised that a writer with a powerful pen and using his pen against tyranny was a formidable enemy. The P.E N. could not cope with all the victims, but—and now I speak specially for the English centre, of which I have most knowledge—we knew that these writers were in some sense our responsibility. We made an appeal, first to our own members and later to the public at large, for funds to help the refugee writers who came to our shores. We collected many thousands of pounds and were able to care for many hundreds of authors who but for our help would have been destitute. We got some of them out of their own countries, we got others out of internment camps, some even out of concentration camps and prisons. And when they were at large, we tried to help them to re-establish themselves as authors. We helped them to find translators and publishers, and gave them the materials of their craft and, above all, we gave them friendship and opportunities to meet their fellow-writers, socially, informally.

So much for the past—and you will forgive this very skimpy and inadequate survey. What about the future? First I suppose it would be just to say: "Carry on! Con-

*tinuez, mes enfants.* " Certainly, none of the activities with which we have busied ourselves must be allowed to cease. We must continue to help victims of oppression; we must continue to advocate freedom of expression in literature; we must go on having meetings and parties, and conferences like this, and international meetings, we must continue to promote the publication of the right kinds of books, and so on, and so on. But are there any special ways in which our association can expand and become more effective? If we were a relief organisation there would be no end to the tasks confronting us in the war-broken world, but I think it would be wrong, unbalanced, if we allowed all our energies to be concentrated on relief work and diverted them from our true purpose, *which is to serve literature and friendliness among writers.* We must not, of course, forget, and are not likely to forget, that there are innumerable writers, of all nationalities, who are in desperate need; broken in health through confinement or torture, or in the mere commerce of war. If we can help them it is our duty to do so, and each centre must tackle its own problems of this kind.

May I throw out a few hints of how I should like to see the P.E.N. expand?

In the first place, we ought greatly to increase our membership. We now number some 9,000 throughout the world, and should be able easily to double this. We must be less snobbish, and invite and welcome writers of all kinds, not only "creative" authors—whether their works are in fiction or philosophy, poetry or psychology; educationalists, scientific and religious writers—all who believe in the ideal of friendliness and freedom of expression. The other aims of our association should be encouraged. Every member should be a recruiting officer. This expansion would not adulterate our society, so long as we maintain the standard of qualifications. And smaller groups devoted to special interests can meet within the framework of the P.E.N.—poets, or psychologists, or playwrights—combining in bigger issues when it is desirable to show the world a common front. I may in passing refer to the *Ancopagistica* Conference held in London in August 1944, when many eminent writers, in all spheres, met and for five days discussed the important theme of the



place of spiritual and economic values in the post-war world. For five days the leading intellectuals presented a common attitude to the importance of freedom of expression.

In the second place, I am persuaded that one of the most valuable, perhaps the most far-reaching thing we can do, is to facilitate contacts between our members everywhere. We are lucky in that, in the very exercise of our profession, we make ourselves known to the world and one another, but that is only one way. The world grows smaller; that is a commonplace. As I flew 3,000-4,000 feet above the surface of the earth from London to Karachi, in less than two days, I was impressed not by the vastness of the world, but by its compactness—England and France visible at the same moment, with Sicily and Italy round the corner! And before you knew where you were, Egypt, the Sinai Desert, and the Iraqi Desert stretched out before you, with the Dead Sea, not dead at all, but gleaming blue, and lo! another day, and you are in India. There are many ways of knowing the globe on which we live and the inhabitants thereof, and flying is only one of them. But think what it means—what it will mean—when flying is within the means of all! How comparatively easy to arrange such conferences as this, so rich in impressions, so provocative, so evocative. If I never came to India again, I should be infinitely the richer for these few weeks I have already spent in your midst. India *lives* for me, now that I have trodden its soil, conversed with many of its people, and soaked in its atmosphere, in a way that it has never lived before. I want everybody to have the right to this sort of experience. It is a realisable dream. But, in the meantime, until it is fully within our power, there are many smaller ways in which we can help, particularly as transport becomes easier.

Another practical way of getting to know one another as writers is to encourage translations and particularly to promote better translations. Not every book *can* be translated. Poetry—the most intimate literary expression of a man's heart and mind—can rarely be fully rendered in any language but the poet's own, and we shall have to content ourselves with a compromise. But other works—in prose, fiction, drama—can often be transferred from one language to an-

other accurately and with grace, *if the right translators are found*. It should become part of the P. E. N.'s work to establish an international panel of approved translators. The London Centre is starting such a panel, going very slowly, to make sure that only the very best translators are recommended

Well, these are only a few random ideas thrown out for your consideration.

Above all, whatever new paths we take, let us remember our main road. We aim at *unity* among writers—but we adore variety. The P. E. N. should be as varied as the world itself, of which it is in a sense the microcosm—and that implies *tolerance*. We must be endlessly tolerant of one another's peculiarities—and live and let live. And that implies liberty to express ourselves in our art and craft—a liberty conditioned solely by the rights of others. We can organise more meetings, and perhaps we can develop the idea of regional conferences. This All-India Conference is a good example. Why not a similar conference in South America? The South American States, so apt to be mutually antagonistic, could come together, perhaps on the soil of one of the smaller countries like Uruguay, or Colombia. Why not a Scandinavian conference? a Pan-Slav conference? a Latin conference?—not confined to the members of those states, of course, but, as here, open to all members of the International P. E. N. who find themselves able to attend. And so on.

A French poet in London—Paul Eluard—was recently asked at a P. E. N. meeting what he thought we should do to foster Franco-British friendship. He had little to say except. "*Il faut se connaître, il faut s'aimer l'un l'autre.*" (We must get to know one another; we must love one another.) It is not a new idea. It is the idea at the back of all true religions. And although we don't like to talk about it, it is after all the idea behind the P. E. N. We must get to know and love one another, even though we find it difficult at times to *like* one another!

Variety in Unity, Freedom of Expression, Friendliness and Tolerance—these are our watchwords, and so far as I can see, the real enemy of such virtues is the attitude to life hideously called "Totalitarian" which is based on the as-

sumption that one person, one nation, one race, has been chosen to lord it over others. We know that the true leaders of men are not those who aspire to lead.

All this may seem like so much day-dreaming in view of the sorry state of the world today. But what are the alternatives?—Hedonism—Despair. Neither of these is likely to be the attitude of the P E N member. So we must believe in our dreams. After all, it has been said authoritatively that by putting one foot before another we can in time encircle the globe.

## THE AMERICAN DELEGATE'S ADDRESS

MR RALPH BLOCK

Madam President, Ladies and Gentlemen —

It is a matter for regret that the restrictions of post-war travel bring me before you here at Jaipur as delegate from the United States to the All-India Writers' Conference of the P E N. For my part I must confess that it is an unexpected privilege to appear here in this capacity, affording a gratification equalled only by the pressing sense of responsibility which it involves.

As one who has practised the craftsmanship of writing in diverse fields, I do not believe that the personal reflections which are bound to arise in time about one's craft can differ materially from the expressed aims of the P. E. N. The writer is, after all, the handmaiden of a sphere of influence, of a domain of human existence, which is larger than himself, which is the realm of thought and imagination. Not only as an artist but indeed as much as a craftsman and technician in all his phases, the writer becomes an instrument in that unending and primary effort of human beings to fix with some degree of indelibility the flux of human relations and the relation of man to God and to man's terrestrial abode. In this pursuit it is naturally the writer first who leans towards recognition of the oneness of humankind as transcending the temporal separations which the incompleteness of human beings have developed. The necessity of a free flow of men's thoughts, imaginings and explorations becomes

naturally a premier obligation of the writer, crossing all boundaries and uniting men and women wherever they live and in whatever tongue they speak in the adventure of human existence. That re-creation of life as a microcosm, which is art, and the illumination, penetration, and comparisons which creative effort affords by its very distortions and strangenesses, these do indeed demand that the writer as artist shall be free to create and that what he creates shall be free to find its own place in the market-place of the mind.

We cannot be blind to the fact that the fever through which the world has passed and is still passing has not left this principle of a free art untouched. The evolution of expression in recent decades toward more absolute forms and symbols, which has been so evident in the arts of decoration and music, has also touched the art of writing. This evolution has been retarded by war, in which contending forces have naturally seized upon all means of expression to substantiate themselves—to themselves and to those to whom they have been opposed. The arts of expression as used for propaganda have tended, for the sake of utility, to reduce themselves to a mean common denominator. But there have also been those artists who, having participated in the war without losing their way in the moral swamps into which war has plunged humanity, have at the same time maintained a vision beyond the terrors and inhumanities of the moment—a vision of the inherent and compulsive nobility of man and the need of maintaining this vision before the eyes of humankind. Among artists, the writer by the character of his art has come under the yoke of this condition—what the Greeks called "*ananke*"—more than any other wielder of the instruments of expression. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was God." All the memory of man is packed into his language; and words therefore have become the barricades upon which the greatest conflicts between men have been fought.

It is this greater exposure, among artists, of the writer to the compulsions of men's opinions which obligates writers to understand as fully as possible the conditions of their existence as artists and to stand staunchly against any conditioning which may destroy their integrity and freedom to express

themselves. By himself, the writer may do much, but a world co-operation such as the P.E.N. provides multiplies the individual's strength in an ascending ratio. It is to voice the belief that world co-operation among writers was never more important than now that the American Centre of the P.E.N. requested me to appear here. I leave this message with you as the profound conviction of your associates in the United States of America.

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## THE FRENCH DELEGATE'S ADDRESS

DR. OLIVIER LACOMBE :

President, Ladies and Gentlemen :—

It is my undeserved privilege to address you today at this first meeting of the All-India Writers' Conference on behalf of the French writers. We had some hope that Louis Aragon might come and represent France today; but he wired to me saying that he was very sorry to have previous engagements in some part of the world—I do not know which—and I regret for your sake that he has not been able to come.

You know that France has for a long time been deeply interested in Indian culture. From the days of Anquetil Duperron, Chezy, Burnouf, to those of the late lamented Professor Sylvain Lévi, Indian culture, Indian languages, have been carefully, passionately studied, searched in and expounded to the French public. It may be that their works are not so well known to you because they are not written in a language which is familiar to all of you, but I can assure you that we have a very beautiful library, if I may say so, a very beautiful series of books dealing with Indian culture, which are not only very scholarly, as they ought to be, but which are also imbued with intense interest in and love for your country. And nowadays a wider public is becoming interested in these studies or at least in the results of these studies. The translations of *Gitanjali* and a few other poems of Dr. Rabindranath Tagore by André Gide have helped the influence of and the interest in Indian art and Indian literature. So it is an immense pleasure to me—a modest philoso-

pler and student of Indian philosophy for more than fifteen years—to represent before you this deep interest of French thought in Indian thought.

I came for the second time to India some eight months ago in the capacity of Cultural Attaché to the French Consulate General in Calcutta, and you may wonder what these words mean. Well, it means that for some time an academic person like me has been attached to the diplomatic service to represent French culture in India and to make easy, to make deeper, to make more frequent the cultural relations between India and France and between France and India. I much value this impersonal aspect of my presence here, because it means for you more than anything I could say on my own account

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### THE POLISH DELEGATE'S ADDRESS\*

MRS EUGENIE DUSZYNSKA :

On behalf of the Polish P.E.N. Club, now in London, I wish to convey to you our hearty greetings and best wishes for the future of the Indian P.E.N. Club. I represent Poland here, and everybody who has learnt that asks me if I come just now from Poland. No, unfortunately. If I were in Poland now, I could not be here, because Poland has become one of the provinces of the Soviet Union and is no more the old, free and independent Poland. In 1940, like so many of our people, I was deported to Siberia, and afterwards I came here and I had then an opportunity to see your beautiful country, to see your kindness towards our people, and to make contacts with you and to learn something about your literature and culture. This is the only thing for which I am grateful to the Soviet Union,—that it has given me the opportunity to see your country. In spite of the great distance between our countries, some of our people, as you know, are very much interested in your culture, and are studying it, and I hope that very soon some books will appear in Polish about India.

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\* Delivered extempore

Almost all of you know Umadevi (Miss Dynowska), Dr Frydman and Dr Falk, who are eagerly studying all about your literature and your culture. Dr Hironmay Ghoshal, who is now in Calcutta, is translating some books from Polish into Bengali,—some books of our famous writer, Nowkowski, who is now in England.

During this war our literature, even like our country, has suffered very heavy losses. Many of our great writers died in the concentration camps,—and one of these martyrs was a leading member of the Polish P E N Club, Boy Zelenski, a well-known writer and famous as a translator of French literature into Polish.

I was not, unfortunately, prepared to make a speech, as I have come as a substitute for Umadevi. I would like to say much more than I have said. Once more I want to thank you for giving me this opportunity to come here and make some contact which I will remember for the rest of my life. I request you to remember that no free Pole can come from Poland. Any man who comes from there just now, represents the Soviet Union. I want to remind you also that there is no freedom of the press in Poland, and no freedom of writing. Anything you can do in this respect, please do.

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### ADDRESS ON "HOMAGE TO TAGORE"

DR MUNI RAJ ANAND

Friends —

I want, first of all, to tell you how happy and grateful I am to have been able to get to Jaipur in time for this Conference of writers called by the All-India P E N Centre. In these days of difficult travel, while the communication lines of the world are still choked up through the ravages of war, it seems almost a miracle for one, in spite of red tape, the Passport Office, etc., to find oneself in any place seven thousand miles from where one happened to be in September 1939.

Also, I would like to take this occasion to deliver to you a message of good-will which many of my friends among the

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\* Only the introductory part of the address is here printed. The rest has already come out as a separate pamphlet.

younger writers in Britain entrusted to me for you. May I assure you that among us young, all national and racial barriers have broken down long ago, and that we are determined to march together, wherever we may be and whatever differences of idea and opinion we may have between us, to help to rebuild the ruined world which we have inherited from the older generation. Our friends in Europe are already busy thinking, writing and re-evaluating their values, and they wish us well while we are gathered here, by the wayside, to pool our thoughts before we go along on our various ways.

When I myself come to reflect by the wayside, I do not know exactly how to say what I have to say. For, almost all the items on the tentative agenda of this Conference, which I saw advertised in the London *P. E. N. News*, seem to me mutually inclusive. As, however, I have a little to say on each of these subjects, I shall, with your permission, ignore formal categories and tell you my thoughts under the main theme of this Conference by way of a tribute to the late Rabindranath Tagore, the first President of the All-India P. E. N. and certainly the greatest single writer that our country has produced in this tormented age. Such a homage to Tagore is overdue, because while his reputation in Europe, based mainly on the charming lyrics of the *Gitanjali*, has now dwindled, for us his work has important implications, if we really mean to tackle the problems of literature in India, to contribute anything to the contemporary renaissance of which he was one of the chief protagonists, if not the sole initiator....

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(After Dr. Anand's paper, the Morning Session concluded.)

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## Afternoon Session 2-30 p. m.

The afternoon session commenced at 2-30 p m under Mrs Sarojini Naidu's presidency. The first hour was devoted to the Symposium on the Modern Indian Literatures, which Prof M. D Altekar introduced with a brief speech \*. At 3-30 p m, the President called upon Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru to initiate the discussion on "The Development of the Indian Literatures as a Uniting Force."

### DISCUSSION ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE INDIAN LITERATURES AS A UNITING FORCE<sup>1</sup>

PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU.

Friends

I am a little embarrassed in having to address you, and I feel like an outsider who has strayed into distinguished company. You have done me the honour of making me a Vice-President of the Indian Centre of the P E N, and I deem it a privilege. But you know very well that my work has been in another direction, and that other activities have absorbed my attention far too much. I am not untouched by, as Sir Mirza put it, "the spiritual paralysis of politics." And yet I have sometimes strayed into other fields by accident, queer and incidental. By accident I became a writer, and so found my way into the P E N.

So far as this subject is concerned, I am quite sure that many of you who are present here know much more about it

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\* The full proceedings of the Symposium on the Modern Indian Literatures are published as a separate volume, edited by Dr Bharatan Kumtrapra, and they are not therefore included in this volume.

<sup>1</sup> All the speakers except one, who participated in the discussion on "The Development of the Indian Literatures as a Uniting Force," including Pandit Nehru spoke extempore. The exception was Mr Nchikshon Das, who read his paper on the subject. Mr Gurdial Malik's paper although submitted to the Conference, was not actually read and therefore comes last.

than I do, and could do more justice to it. All I can say is of a very general nature, and perhaps that will be an advantage, because that will mean that I will not inflict myself for too long a time on you. The subject is "The Development of the Indian Literatures as a Uniting Force." It is a fascinating subject, and I wish I knew more about it except that there is so much to know if one really is to deal with it in any proper style, which is truly beyond me.

The questions that strike me in this connection are these—Are Indian literatures a uniting force or not? Do we take it for granted that they are a uniting force or that they are going to be a uniting force? A superficial survey would, I am afraid, tend to show that they create or might create greater provincialism and erect new barriers to unity. As you know, one of the questions to which frequent reference is made nowadays in the so-called "language question" of India. When we talk about the "language question," we do not refer to the dozen or so languages—the principal languages—of India, but rather to Hindi and Urdu, which are one language with different literary forms drawing inspiration from the same fountain-head. That is the language question! There is hardly any cause, so far as I know, for any conflict between the different languages in their different spheres, but conflict appears sometimes with regard to Hindi or Urdu, though they are but one language with different literary forms.

However, it is interesting to trace the development of Indian languages. For long years, long centuries, they formed a happy joint family, very much dependent on their parent language, Sanskrit,—so dependent indeed that they did not grow at all. Later, Persian came into the field, superficially on the top. Persian also affected our languages, but it was a restraining force which would not allow them to grow, since learned people then thought it beneath their dignity to write or speak at select assemblies like this in any language but Sanskrit or Persian. If anything worth while was to be written, surely it must be written in Sanskrit, not in Hindi or Bengali or some other dialect, and to some extent that happened later with regard to Persian. People talked or wrote in Sanskrit or Persian. Of course, only a very small

circle could talk those languages, and that is why, I suppose, this divorce between that small circle at the top talking or writing in Sanskrit or Persian and the vast numbers talking in other languages, more living languages, prevented the growth of these latter, and the growth also of our modern literatures

Now when I say that Sanskrit and Persian were a restraining influence, please do not imagine that I am condemning Sanskrit or Persian at all. Sanskrit is of course something of which every Indian is infinitely and rightly proud. Sanskrit really has performed a great unifying task throughout the ages, and as a unifying force it has obviously been the greatest instrument of the continuity of our culture for thousands of years. There is therefore no question whatever of my condemning Sanskrit.

Persian came late in the field of development of the Indian languages, and yet it played a fairly important part in later centuries, affecting almost all our provincial languages considerably—and thus Persian too became a part of our national heritage. In this way Persian also became a unifying force, at any rate for the upper classes, though not so much for the masses.

Sanskrit, then, pre-eminently, and Persian to some extent, have played a great part in Indian literary life. For my part, I would like large numbers of persons all over India to study Sanskrit, and also Persian, because it is a very beautiful language and is intimately associated, not only with our modern languages but with Sanskrit, which, as you know, is its sister language. Hindi, in fact, is nearer to Persian in some respects than to classical Sanskrit.

However that may be, the fact we should remember is that our provincial languages were controlled by these two aristocratic languages, by Sanskrit especially, and it took a tremendous lot of time for the provincial languages to grow. Gradually, by force of circumstances, out of the hundreds of original dialects, Hindi developed, Bengali developed, Marathi and Gujarati and other languages developed. In the South, of course, there was a different family of languages, which, though different, became through Sanskrit intimately asso-

ciated with the other languages of India,—and so we have now about a dozen principal languages of India.

One of the remarkable instances of the development of languages in India is provided by Urdu, which grew up and exhibited the interplay of these various forces that flowed in India during the last two hundred years, and became essentially an Indian language, with probably 80% of words that are common to it and Hindi, but of course with a number of Persian words as well. The main difference between Hindi and Urdu is not so much in the vocabulary but in their respective literary forms. The Hindi literary form has been, I suppose, derived directly from Sanskrit—I speak with diffidence in this matter—and all the metaphors and similes and ways of thought and expression have been likewise derived from Sanskrit, and also from the common background of life in India. Thus the literary and other forms of Hindi are Indian no doubt, for no outside influence has permeated them, but they are very old, and long after they have ceased to have any meaning, some of them are still being used.

Urdu, the same language as Hindi with almost the same vocabulary, with a few words thrown in from outside, developed as an entirely different literary form. Its ways of expression were not derived from Indian life as a rule, its similes and metaphors were derived from Central Asia, or the Caucasus or Iran, and today in our colloquial Hindustani or Hindi so many of these expressions, similes and metaphors, which are not really Indian in origin, have become very common.

As I have said already, the language question mainly deals with Hindi and Urdu. Why there should be so much argument and so much heat and passion, I do not know. But, of course, it is now hardly a question of language. It has become a question of selection of a common language for India, and that is why, perhaps, there is so much heat and passion. It has become a political question in a way, or rather, in a way politics affects the question very much.

The result is obvious. In Hindi and Urdu we have formed certain literary devices, or have certain sophisticated patterns, which attract those who are orthodox. But these devices and patterns have lost their vitality or popular

appeal, and must progressively grow more and more stale in spite of a certain beauty in them, because those forms are wholly unconnected with the life of the common people. They remain the same, oblivious to the changing environment. That, of course, applies not only to Hindi and Urdu but to so many aspects of our life. We are sticking to ancient forms so much in our social life, sometimes without any perceptible sense in those forms, that some of our activities are a puzzle even to people just outside our province in our own country. And language, after all, is something which reflects the life of the people. If the life of the people is confined to a narrow circle of old-fashioned forms, then inevitably their language also is bound to be like that. And it is no use blaming the standard of this or that language, if that language became isolated from the life of the people. I refer only to the literary language, because the popular languages of this time revealed their vitality in popular songs, folk songs, and the rest. Though these popular songs were quite vital in their own way, they had no chance of gaining importance in the centres of learned people for, say, a hundred years. In our popular languages we find folk songs, ballads, poems, etc., while the prose works were limited to Sanskrit or Persian. Every serious work was, in fact, written in Sanskrit or Persian. But the popular languages flourished among the common people and in the households. So this divorce between the language of the common people and the language of the learned persons has had, I suppose, a very harmful effect on the growth of our languages. That divorce, in a sense, has had its harmful effect, not only on those languages, but on life itself. Many of our ills in India, I think, are probably the result of that. Well, anyhow these popular languages grew, in spite of all the obstructions and the various influences restricting their growth, because life has to grow. But they grew so slowly, and in fact much of their growth has taken place in poetry, in which some of our languages are very rich. Almost all the growth of these our Indian languages has taken place during the last two hundred years or less—here, again, I am subject to correction—and especially their literatures are of recent growth.

Now the growth of these provincial languages has not, so

far as I know, tended at all towards disunity. To some extent, no doubt, it may have accentuated a certain provincialism, or given a little push to provincial culture. A Bengali is very rightly proud of his Bengali language, Gujaratis of their Gujarati, Maharashtrians of Marathi, and so on. They have their legitimate prides, but I do not think that there is any conflict between this feeling and the larger feeling of national identity, because the whole basis of India's thought, as I know it, has been never a mere regimentation of people's ideas, but of unity plus diversity, plus variety. Therefore the two do not conflict, because each province, each linguistic area, taking pride in its own past cultural achievements, realizes that it is but part of a larger whole. In the past, the cultural unity of India was maintained, not only by one language, Sanskrit, but also by a special philosophy which was common to the whole of India. The old philosophical outlook was later on superseded to some extent at least, and therefore I feel that it is not now strong enough to be a unifying force to the extent, to the degree, it was in the past. Other things have happened. Possibly, the unifying force today would be, not so much national but something more international, something which is common to all nations,—which, again, would not mean the submergence of the national identity in its entirety, but rather the two existing together.

I do not personally see any need to answer the questions which I put at the beginning. I do not see anything tending towards disunity or towards real essential separatism in the growth of provincial languages in India. There is also another factor to consider. In fact, if I may quote the instance of Rabindranath Tagore, it is extraordinary how a man like Tagore who wrote in the Bengali language influenced every other language in India, Hindi certainly, and also the other languages. It shows how these cultural giants grow across provincial barriers. If one language grows, it surely helps others to grow. It does not hinder the others. It does not come into conflict with them. That is my chief grievance with those people who fight and argue about Hindi and Urdu. I have no doubt in my mind that if Hindi grows rich it will help Urdu, and if Urdu grows rich it will help Hindi.

I am quite sure at the same time that Hindi and Urdu are bound to grow nearer to each other, not because you and I may like it or not like it, but because circumstances are forcing us to develop them as a common language. It seems to me a sheer waste of energy that these champions of Urdu should so strongly object to Hindi influence, and *vice versa*.

Therefore, I do feel that this renaissance of our provincial languages that has taken place is a thing which helps towards unification, and can never be a destructive factor in India. But apart from the language question, it depends again on the background of politics as they develop in India, because languages will be affected by them. For example, there is the Pakistan controversy. Suppose, for a moment, that Urdu becomes the official language in Pakistan and Hindi in the rest of India. If that leads to the destruction of Indian unity, it is not the fault of the languages but of certain arguments on the political front that are taking place in India. Languages by themselves, I am convinced, are not a destructive factor, not at all a factor leading to disunity, partly because the languages are akin to each other and the growth of one helps to build up the others, and anyhow they are not going to hinder each other's growth.

Apart from this question of politics behind them, ultimately it all depends mainly on whether we have some kind of a common philosophy, common ethical standards, common artistic standards. If they differ greatly, then those divergences may show themselves in our languages and may lead to unfortunate consequences. If there are vital differences or fundamental differences in our philosophy of life, then the barriers between nations will remain high. If we have certain standards of conduct in common, we can get along amicably, even if we may differ physically, spiritually and artistically. If not, I can only guess what the future is going to be. I am not quite competent to know for certain which will triumph, the good in life or the evil in life.

One thing more before I finish my half hour, and that is this: in literature everything depends on how much freedom there is to function. Freedom of thought, freedom of expression, freedom of occupation, and freedom generally to func-

tion as we believe, are all essential for the growth of literature. The slowness in the development of many of our languages is largely due to the absence of political freedom. Lack of political freedom comes in the way of all progress. But even in a politically free India, if there is no freedom of speech and expression, then it can only be an obstruction in the way of the growth of our languages and it may even lead to unhealthy and disuniting forces growing up. Restrictions on freedom of speech and expression will prevent the language from affecting the mind of the people at large. That means that you are creating barriers to their self-expression, that you are separating some people at the top from the vast masses at the bottom and thereby creating a select coterie which functions in an artificial atmosphere. There is nothing more dangerous than this idea of authority. Personally, I rebel against that idea in all its phases. In this connection, I was surprised at the whole body of the P.E.N. standing up when a princely message was read this morning, even though it may be in accordance with the traditions of the State.

So it seems to me that the very essence of our growth is this essential freedom, political freedom, because the other types of freedom depend on this. Along with political freedom, there must of course be freedom of speech and expression. Also, the words that we use, the language that we use, should keep in touch with changing conditions. We are a conservative people and we still stick to false values. This sticking to outmoded values obstructs the growth of one's culture. It has already done us immense harm. Sanskrit lost its popularity because it did not keep in touch with the life of the people. One reason why provincial languages and literatures are more vital today than they were before is because they went back to the life of the people and drew inspiration from it. That, again, is another reason why they should develop as a uniting force, because the life of the people in India, taken as a whole, does not differ greatly. The difference—such as it is—is at the top. If you once go down to the large masses, you come to something that is common, —whether you express it in this language or in that language does not matter.



Well, now I leave it to more learned persons to continue this discussion

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PRINCIPAL ALAY AHMED SUROOR

Friends,—

I do not presume to know more than the distinguished lecturer, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. But I have come here as a humble student of literature to say something on the subject which has been so ably initiated by the distinguished lecturer. I feel that the most important point that he made in the course of his learned discourse was that essentially Hindi and Urdu are one language. This statement may not be considered exactly accurate by jurists. When I say that Hindi and Urdu are not exactly one language but in view of the fact that they had a common origin and for a long time they have developed on certain common lines, and then, due to certain historic influences, they have drifted apart, and yet they should, for the sake of forging a national language, be brought together once again,—this qualified statement may be considered as fairly representative and fairly true.

The second point which I wish to emphasise is that, though Hindi as Hindi and Urdu as Urdu should be unifying influences, there have been tendencies, not always political, not always domestic, which have tended to make them separatist in their influence. I feel it necessary to point out that, as it has always happened in history after a time, a language has been taken up by the literary class and cut off from the general mass of the people. The same thing happened with Sanskrit for a long number of years and the same thing happened with Urdu. But in the beginning of the nineteenth century, historic forces compelled a change in the development of Urdu literature. I must admit that to my mind this modern Urdu literature is due to certain conscious and certain other unconscious trends developing towards greater simplicity and wider appeal, while certain separatist influences in modern Hindi—I cannot properly estimate, but that is my meagre knowledge—have tended more and more towards rationalisation. Apart from the political motive,

about which I am not competent to speak, from the purely literary point of view, this rationalisation is a sad mistake and is rather like putting the clock back.

I feel, however, that as Western influence is felt more and more, as a larger mass appeal, a more brotherly outlook, a greater realism and a greater determination to win freedom and happiness for all, emerge and surge through the people, this separatist tendency may disappear. I have used the word 'may' and not 'should,' because sometimes it happens that great movements are side-tracked in the course of history by certain strong though diverse tendencies that are cropping up from time to time, and therefore I feel it my duty to point out that so long as the present condition is justified either on grounds of the need for feeding the languages of the South or is justified on grounds of greater literary skill or on the ground of linking it up to a common culture, it is certainly bound to prove a tremendous factor in the larger interests of the languages and of India. I may here point out that, though the distinguished Pandit did not mention it in his lecture, in one of his papers he did point out that the Roman script would certainly make the two languages come a little nearer than they are. If these big questions are debated upon and if they are settled finally in academic bodies rather than in the heat and passion of the political field, they are sure gradually to pave the way for a better understanding.

I may add just one word more, which is this: that, to my mind, the impatience which the distinguished lecturer has displayed is the impatience of an idealist who is extremely angry with the slow pace of progress in this country. It seems to me that gradually, in spite of forces to the contrary, the larger and greater impulse which is surging in the heart of humanity is tending towards eliminating his fears and making the languages simpler and possessing ample mass appeal. I visualize later a common language which may have different shades, according as it touches different masses, but certainly the new masses that might emerge, may require and may feel happy in a new and better language, a better press, than we now possess.

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MR NABAKISHORE DAS.

President, Brothers and Sisters.—

After the great world catastrophe we have met here for the first time to exchange our ideas on literature. This will be a unique date in the cultural history of India. The cloudless blue sky hovers over our head. It reminds me of an infinite and indivisible symbol but, when I look down, the earth is divided into so many little bits of land. India is no exception to this general rule. But literature which springs from the deeper layer of the human spirit gives us the message of friendship and unity. Even if we analyse the modern world literature, the unity of the human mind will be clearly evident. Literature is the great uniting force to bring a world-wide cultural fellowship. But to-day we have assembled here to confine our discussion to the development of the Indian literatures as a uniting force.

India is not of to-day. Its literature, art and culture have an age-long tradition. There is no doubt diversity, but unity can very easily be perceived in the very garb of diversity. India has one hundred and seventy-nine languages and five hundred and forty-four dialects. It has fifteen major cultural languages belonging to the two major Indo-Aryan and Dravidian families, but India's many languages are not a curse. Every province in India has its uniqueness but amidst the diversity and difference the unity and indivisibility of India stand predominant.

Literature may be termed the mental mirror of a nation. We can very clearly see the inner image of India pictured in this national mirror called "literature." Provincial languages may be different yet we find the great unity of thought and ideal in almost all the literatures of India. Ideas united the people of India and still unite us to-day. Our many languages are only different ways to realise the truth which knows no boundary. Our provincial languages are only different means to enrich our common cultural heritage. Concrete examples may be given to illustrate the ideal which I am putting before you. The *Astereya Brahmana* is the cultural bridge which united the Aryans and non-Aryans of the Indian population. Even we can name Nagarjuna,

another cementing force which bound the Aryans of the North with the non-Aryans of the South. The Vedas, the Upanishads and the Sanghitas, the dream flowers of Aryans which blossomed in the north-west part of India, influenced the entire intellectual and deeper life of the Indian nation. These philosophical and religious ideas and ideals are our great literary treasures. The ancient philosophical literature is the backbone of Indian culture. Hence we can definitely say that Sanskrit was the background and source of all Indian provincial literatures. Even Sanskrit itself was enriched by different writers belonging to different provinces of India. If Kalidas came from Ujjain, Jaidev was born in Orissa to sing the sweet melodies of *Geet Govinda*. Therefore Sanskrit may be regarded as the common Indian national literature and every part of India may claim a share in her development and enrichment. Religion and religious thinkers united the whole Indian nation by their universal preachings which were recorded in the vast religious literatures of India. Thinkers with their philosophical perception of unity and intellectual grasp of universality kept India united. Poets like Kabir, Nanak, Dadan, Tukaram, Salabega of Orissa, Daulat Kaji and Alwal of Bengal sang the song of Hindu-Muslim unity. Where learned men stumbled, there the poets and seers became the guardian priests of Indian unity. Mainuddin Chisti, a Muslim fakir, Kabir, a half-educated weaver, Amir Khusru, the court poet of Allaudin Khilji, sang the song of human brotherhood and paved the way for Hindu-Muslim unity. Even we can go back to *Boudha-Doha* and *Pahurda-Doha* of Muni Ranu Singh where the same songs of unity are echoed. In the Muhammadan period, Orissa and Bengal developed a unique literature called "*pala*" to bring Hindu-Muslim unity.

Between the poetry of the different provincial languages, there is difference only of language, not of theme and spirit. This can be proved scientifically by analysing the different main provincial literatures of India. By examining one grain from the cooking pot we can know very well the condition of the whole boiled rice in the pot. I am here making a brief comparative analysis of the literary histories of (1) Hindi, (2) Telugu, (3) Assamese, (4) Bengalee, (5) Mara-

thi, (6) Gujarati and (7) Oriya Nor am I forgetting Persian and Urdu of Indian origin

The folk literature is the first literary window where we get the glimpse of the mind of a common man The common muse in India sings only songs of love and religion, because India is fond of peace and tranquillity which is quite natural with the environment of an agricultural country

Let me begin with the Hindi literature, one of the major literatures of India Its first growth was in 1050 A. D. After the first period, Ādikāla, we get Pūrba-Madhyā Kāla when religion became the greatest theme of Hindi literature Kabir, Nanak, Dadan and Sundar Das were the great exponents of the cult called "Love-devotion" In the *Uttara-Madhyā Kāla*, human love was the predominant note In the fourteenth century Chandī-Das, the Vaisnava poet of Bengal, was singing the songs of Radha and Krishna In the same age Vidyapati of Mithila sang also the song of love-devotion. In this connection we cannot forget the name of the lady poet Meerabai of Mewar

Languages may be different but the spirit is the same throughout India Now let me talk of Telugu literature which began in the eleventh century The old Telugu literature may be divided into three periods First came the Epic or the Puranic age, which may again be subdivided into *Mahabharat* Kavita and *Ramayan* Kavita groups, and the other two periods being Prabandha Kavita and Sataka Kavita. This very ideal can also be traced in the Assamese literature The literature of Assam began in the twelfth century The early Assamese literature can be divided into three periods—pre-Vaisnavite, Vaisnavite and post-Vaisnavite Even with the Vaisnava literature the development of the Epic continued In the post-Vaisnavite period we find other Kavyas as we find in Hindi and Oriya literatures The picture of Bengalee literature is not very different from what I have said above The ancient Bengalee literature is divided into two ages, the ages of Vaisnava and Sakta Kavita Of course *Mahabharat* and *Ramayan* were the common themes in every province of India

A glimpse of Marathi literature which began in the twelfth century can be given here The ancient Marathi literature

may be divided into three periods—pre-Sivaji period, literature after the Muslim conquest and the period from the time of Sivaji to the Peshwas. In the first period we find the great poet Namdeva whose Abhangas are very popular even in the Maharashtra of to day. Then came Ekanatha, another religious poet like Namdeva. Even in the time of Sivaji, we hear of the names of Tukaram and Motopantha, who are famous for their devotional literature. The basic principles of these literatures are religion and love-devotion or *Prëmabhakti*. The Gujarati literature also does not show the counter of an unknown coinage. Gujarati literature began in the fifteenth century, Narsinh Mehta being the first devotional poet whose Bhajanas about Radha and Krishna and "Hundis" are still popular in Gujarat. We find Bhima and Bhalan of the fifteenth century and Shyamala Bhatta and Premananda in the sixteenth century and Dayarama in the seventeenth century, all singing songs of prayer.

The literature of my province is not different from the picture painted above. The development of Oriya literature may be traced back to the tenth century. Out of the folk literature we get the Boudha Dohas, which at once take us to the great philosophical world where the message of unity is very predominant. Maitri or the universal friendship and compassion is the message of these Boudha Dohas. After various compositions of Chautisas we come to the great age of Sarala, the first Oriya epic poet of the *Mahabharata*. After Sarala we have got many other epic poets like Balarama of *Ramayana* fame and Jagannath of *Bhagavat* fame. But gradually, like the Hindi poets, Oriya poets sang the songs of earthly love. Upendra Bhaya became the king-poet of Oriya Kavyas. These Kavyas may be compared with Prabandha Kavita, and Oriya songs, Chaupadis and Chautisas, to the Satakas of Telugu literature.

By-the-by, let me say something of Urdu and Persian literature of Indian origin. Urdu, which literally means a camp language, developed in the eleventh century at the time of the last independent Hindu king, Prithviraj. Though Chandkor was the first Urdu poet, Amir Khusru, the court poet of Allauddin Khilji really paved the way for Hindu-Muslim unity through literature. In almost all the Diwans of Urdu poets,

human love and devotion to a single Godhead are the two main themes. We also find that Mullick Mahamed Jaisi wrote a Kavya, *Padmavat*, about the beautiful, heroic Hindu Queen Padmini of Chitor.

It will not be out of place to refer to the growth of Persian poetry in India. In almost all Persian Diwans, love and devotion are the two main themes. Sufism, the philosophy of which is embodied in these Diwans, stands for universal brotherhood, worship of one Godhead and respect for creation. This doctrine in no way goes against the philosophy preached by the Hindu writers of different provinces of India. Even Faizi in the time of Akbar wrote the story of Nala-Damayanti in Persian.

From these analytical studies, it will be quite evident that Indian literatures were assimilative and liberal and there was interchange of ideas and ideals among the different literatures of India.

Religion (Dharmā), human love (Kama) and salvation (Moksha) were the three predominant notes which can be traced in every literature in India. A particular ideal was in vogue in a particular age, and the spirit of every literature was almost the same throughout the length and breadth of India. A word may be spoken about the development of the modern literatures after the British conquest. Prose has developed. Subjectivism and realism are the two key-notes of modern Indian literature, which are cast in one mould.

This clearly indicates that at bottom India is one in spirit. Political upheavals have not very much affected the inner consciousness of the Indians. Of course there are a few exceptions, as there should be, in every province of India. Foreigners have come and conquered India, but the very conquerors became the devotees of our great Motherland, India. Indian literature is not static, it is a dynamic creation whose very source is something eternal, which neither changes nor divides but binds our vast continent into a single and indivisible whole. It is based on truth which is unchangeable. Hence in all changes and slogans of division and disintegration, the Indian seers and *littérateurs* have sung something deeper and nobler, which not only unites India but sends the message of love and universalism through-

out the wide world. Indian poets and singers have popularised *Bharatiyata* or *Bharata Adarsa* (Indian ideal), if I am permitted to use the term, by depicting the great epic characters of *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana*, in the different provincial languages of India. This was a great uniting force which the development of Indian literatures clearly unfurls before our very eyes. The Sarala and Jagannath of Oriya literature, Tulsi of Hindi, Krutivas of Bengali, Nannaya and Tikkana of Telugu, Sankara Deva of Assamese, Kamban of Tamil, Bhut of Sindhi, Narsinh Mehta of Gujarati, all preached the great *Bharata Adarsa* (Indian ideal) in their respective provincial languages of India. There is no doubt diversity and variety, still Indian unity is as clear as crystal, which reminds me of the old Sanskrit saying —

“Truth is one, but is described as many.”

Though some think India to be many, she is indeed one and indivisible.

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DR. C. KUNHAN RAJA

Friends :—

Sitting a little behind Pandit Nehru, I could not closely follow him, but I do not feel that whatever I say will change the trend of his talk. The greatest difficulty in making Indian languages and literatures a unifying force is the modern disruptive tendency. There is English literature pitted against the Indian literatures, there is the controversy between Dravidian and Aryan literatures, there is the controversy between Muslim and Hindu literatures and I do not know whether there can be a more criminal betrayal of the great trust that we have inherited than when we set these great literatures one against the other. Historically, there cannot be any kind of conflict. Now take Urdu and Hindi. I know that it is a big problem in North India. I think I can claim to know a little of Vedic Sanskrit and Arabic. They are sister languages, and Urdu is the product of the union and the later developments of these two languages. And it is this Urdu that is now being set against Hindi, and Hindi against Urdu. Now what are these modern North Indian



languages ? I have seen a lot of Dravidian elements in classical Hindi and Bengali. Dravidian languages have influenced Sanskrit, and anyone who knows modern North Indian languages and the Dravidian languages must understand that the former have developed from Sanskrit on account of the absorption and assimilation of Dravidian elements. And, on the other hand, Dravidian languages and literatures contain a lot of Sanskrit matter. Thus these languages have not developed through a process of disruption, but through attempts at free assimilation and purposive unification. As far as I am concerned, I cannot understand any kind of distinction, any kind of conflict, between one literature and another, even as I cannot understand any kind of conflict between music and painting. Different arts, different literatures, are only different methods of expression. By inheritance I know a little of Malayalam literature, by profession Sanskrit, and to some extent I have been brought into contact with Hindi and Rajasthani. I am responsible for the publication of some of the best heroic lyrics of Rajasthani, and when I read them I feel quite at home, as when I am reading the heroic literature of my own language. So what we want is, first of all, to eradicate this disruptive tendency.

There is, then, another thing. Very few people know anything beyond their own literature. In India, I see no reason why men of letters—I am not talking of the ordinary man—should not know about half a dozen literatures. When a man knows one language, it is a very easy thing to study another language, and when he knows one literature, all other literatures are already known. A brush-up is all that is needed. Unless we remove this tendency towards disruption, and unless we go beyond our own literatures, there is no possibility of these literatures becoming a unifying force. That is the urgent appeal that I have to make to the members of the P E N—to go beyond one's own and study other literatures as well, in other words, to understand one's own literature in the light of other literatures.

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DR MD SHAHIDULLAH

Friends —

The development of the Indian literatures as a uniting force is an interesting subject, no doubt. I know several languages of India and their literatures. And it seems to me that of late there has arisen a tendency of decadence, of communalism, and what not. So as members of the P.E.N. we must have a clear-cut vision before our eyes.

I know that the literature of the Hindus derives its vision from the Vedas. I know that Muslim literature derives its vision from the Koran. But in all religions, there is a relative unity, a common factor of truth, and if we keep that before our eyes, I think we can rise above the pettiness which dominates or paralyzes the literatures—and especially, as I find, our Urdu and Hindi literatures. We must swear by the religion of humanity. Whether a man is a Hindu or a Muslim is a question of personal religion. After all, we belong to the great human society; and if a writer keeps before his eyes this ideal—"I serve humanity, no matter where I am or at what time I am, and I will write for all times, for all centuries"—then, and then alone, we can have a unifying force in the Indian literatures. Whether Hindi and Urdu are two languages or one language is a question which ethnologists must look at with a sort of disdain.

Well, I do not like to add anything more, but I would like to conclude by saying. Let us please rather see a brighter and happier and richer India, and let all our efforts be concentrated towards the creation of literature which will be full of humanity, shorn of all the weaknesses with which we are faced!

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MR A. S. P. AYYAR.

Madam President, Ladies and Gentlemen.—

The question which Pandit Nehru has ably put before you is whether the languages of India will tend towards unity or discord. Like all other questions, it depends upon what we mean to do. Are the different writers of India

going to live together amicably, or are they going to cut one another's throats? In the same way, are the different languages of India going to work for unity or for discord? Both are possible. The song of hate is easier to write than the song of love. The song of hate may be followed by the illiterate masses much more easily than the song of love. War is easier than peace. Even though the war is over, peace has not yet dawned on us. So, the main problem is to educate the people in the right way. If the people are educated about their own proper self-interest, I think the literatures will take care of themselves. What we want is propaganda for peace, for good-will among men. In our great literature, the Vedas, written about six thousand years ago, we have the famous sentence "The whole world is my motherland." Kamban, the Tamil poet, says of Ram Rajya. Whether one be a Hindu or a Muslim, there is not one who has not got enough, and there is not one who has got more than enough! That is Ram Rajya, not because there is an incarnation, but because there are no millionaires, no Maharajas, no paupers, and no depressed classes. Here is inspiring literature—a literature with vision. Anybody who reads it, wherever he may be, will be uplifted by such thoughts. But one will feel only depressed by reading stories of Hitler, Mussolini and such others in the world, who have led the way to the destruction of their own countries.

So I feel that Pandit Nehru uttered the right note when he said that the vernaculars are nearest to the common life of the common man, and therefore ring true. Sanskrit and Persian unfortunately got away from the common life of the common man and lived in a detached atmosphere. Like the aeroplane dropping atomic bombs, they are only dropping destruction now. So if every one of us assembled here will try our best to make our vernacular writers confine themselves to the life in India, the life in the world, every vernacular will naturally lead to the ultimate goal. There will no doubt be people who will work for discord, but the men of good-will will be greater, just as in every community, although there will be thieves and loose women, there will be a far larger number of honest men and good women, who alone will determine the general texture of the society.

In the same way, if communalism has run mad in Urdu and Hindi, we South Indians who are asked by you to adopt Hindi will want you to make peace among yourselves before we follow you. No man will follow a two headed monster. And even with the great authority of Mahatma Gandhi, I warn you that the people of the South will refuse to have this Hindi,—or rather this language with both the Nagari and the Urdu scripts. Let us have the Roman script advocated straightway. Let us scrap all the scripts of India. Even otherwise we have to do that. But for this we may have to wait till we get freedom, for otherwise people may suspect that our reform is due to foreign influence. But the moment we get our freedom, let us scrap all the scripts, the Tamil script and the Telugu script, the Urdu script and the Hindi script. Let us bury some in the Bay of Bengal, some in the Arabian Sea, and burn some in the holy ghats at Benares. We are the only people to preserve these antediluvian fossils as living things. We have to do that if we want to become one nation, with one thought, and one language,—although with different forms and different ideals. If another war is inevitable, the atomic bomb will be the end of the world and of civilization. Even savages will be exterminated. Let me appeal to you, members of the P.E.N., you who have assembled here in large numbers, to use your influence with the people for the greater good of the country and the world. It is only foreigners who say that we Indian writers have no influence with the masses, but I know that if we go to the villages, we can make our people do almost anything. Let us preach to them the message of peace, let us preach to them the oneness of mankind, let us preach to them the truth of God, let us preach to them and make them work for peace, harmony, unity, not only of India but of the wider world. India never exploited other countries, India does not want to be dependent on others but neither does it want to be an imperialist nation, and India's ambition is to be a friend of all and to be at peace with the whole world. I think that we writers in the sixteen principal vernaculars will do yeoman service under the guidance of our worthy President and under the rules of the P.E.N., so that India may lead the world, not in power and glory but in

peace and harmony, and our languages may once more become the vehicles of living men.

Nowadays many of the vernaculars have not got any books on astronomy, psychology, history or other learned subjects. English has to serve all these purposes. But even the most beautiful lady in the country cannot be adopted as your mother. So I would ask you, ladies and gentlemen, to look to the development of your vernacular first, to the national language of India next and to English or any other international language in the third place. When we do this, we will have nothing to be ashamed of, everything to congratulate ourselves upon as members of the P E N

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DR UMESHA MISHRA

Friends —

I feel that it is not the language which unifies but the spirit which will unite us together. We find that India is a country of many languages and scripts, and you cannot remove them from the country. They will remain. The different languages, the different scripts, will remain with us. What I find is this unnecessary and undue importance is being given to this question of Urdu and Hindi. Urdu writers are making Urdu more and more Persian. Hindi writers are making Hindi more and more Sanskrit. As a result, the two languages are becoming more and more artificial every day. It has come to the stage when, if you read a Hindi *kavya*, it is unintelligible to you and perhaps even the writer himself will be unable to explain it to you! We have come to the stage where the spirit is being altogether divorced. We are going away further and further from actual life. It is life which we must portray, and it is life which we must join together. I think if we leave the question alone, it will in course of time come to its natural place and achieve adjustment. I have seen the same spirit running through all the languages of Northern India. That is to say, if you leave languages to cultivate the spirit, cultivate the thought, unification is still possible. But if you emphasise more and more



in our desire to be, shall I say, "PEN-ish" this afternoon and to be brothers under the sky or that sort of thing, should look at this matter a little more clearly. I do not think that the development of literatures, however desirable,—and that they are desirable I have no doubt whatsoever, and I should not have you think that I wish you not to develop the various languages of this country—does not in itself make for unification. What makes for unification are other things

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DR RADHAKUMUD MOOKERJI

Friends —

In the first place, I should like to say that we all feel indebted to Pandit Nehru for the lead he has given, not merely to this Conference, but also to the whole country, towards the solution of some of our most perplexing linguistic and political problems. I am just intervening in the discussion to present before you one or two points, so that I might provoke him into making another speech which we might relish. My first point is this, that as a historian I should like to say that the great Buddha, when he wanted to preach his religion, realised that he must use the language of the masses for spreading his message. It was he who gave the impulse to the development of 'Prakrit', and we have actually on record in the sacred Pali books how Buddha really started the movement by which the vernaculars had their origin.

My second point is this, that I am very much a lover of Sanskrit and am very much indebted to the Pandit for the very noble place he has given in our modern scheme of studies to Sanskrit. The only point of our contention is this, that perhaps he has referred to the 'dead weight' of Sanskrit. I should think that Sanskrit had never worked as a drag on the growth of the vernaculars, but on the contrary the vernaculars had depended more and more upon the thought and wisdom of the parent language. For instance, the literature of Rabindranath Tagore is very much indebted to the wisdom of the Upanishads and also to the poetry of Kalidasa, and he always used to draw his inspiration for his writings from the ample and precious storehouse of Sanskrit literature.

The other point that I wish to place before you is this, that perhaps at this time we should make Sanskrit a sort of compulsory classical language along with Arabic, and that for a very good reason. We cannot replace Sanskrit by any other language since it is the language of the learned and the cultured classes, the foundation language of India. No doubt, we cannot use Sanskrit as the language of the courts, but still Sanskrit has its own place in the scheme of languages, so that we should introduce this educational reform,—namely, that in all schools we should have Sanskrit as the compulsory classical language for the Hindus and Arabic or Persian for the Muslims. That is the point I wish to emphasise.

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MR. GURDIAL MALLIK \*

The various literatures in India are like the workers in a vineyard, owned by a single proprietor. For, consciously or unconsciously, they are governed, in their basic outlook, by the spirit of the subcontinent, as it has been a-flourishing down the ages. It is the spirit of fellowship. As a *Rishi* of the Vedic times said long, long ago :

"May I with the feeling of friendliness help you to become comrades, united in mind and in enjoyment."  
(*Altharva*, 3,30,7)

It is obvious, however, that to-day the manner of an author's approach to life is different from that of his predecessors. He looks at Life through the microscope of the mind, delighting in perceiving its infinitesimal aspects and expressions. And, attracted by any one particular unfoldment or impact of it, he rivets his attention on it and thus his attitude to the world and his way of feeling, thinking and acting is finally determined

An author is a product of his province's culture. For several decades past, this latter has been influenced exten-

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\* Mr Gurdial Mallik did not actually participate in the discussion. But the paper that he submitted to the Conference on the subject was deemed to have been read, and is here printed as it is relevant to the main discussion. -



sively as well as intensively by the scientific civilization of the West. And so he has been rudely shaken out of the traditional mental *milieu*

But his condition is still somewhat similar to that of the man who has been affected strongly by his first taste of liquor. He is not himself, his feet are unsteady. He is unable to hold together, with any degree of certainty or sanity, his multiple reactions and to reorient himself to their cumulative content or character. So it is rather difficult to assess aright the inherent abiding value or vision of the various literatures of India, as they are presented to us at present.

Now, it would appear as if the call of the common man, as he is envisaged in terms of economic independence and political enfranchisement, is among the most powerful influences by which authors in the different provinces have been touched. Therefore, whether it be in their story or song, essay or appraisal, it is this call which they so much desire to emphasise and implement through the written word. This is specially evident in areas round about the industrial towns in this country. And it is no exaggeration to say that almost all the different literatures in the country, *in the main*, are urban.

But India, as is well known, lives in her villages. The life of the people there is not changed radically in its tenor or tone. They still live by the plough and learn from the pole-star. And because as yet the dark cloud of illiteracy hangs over them, the light of the modern scientific civilization has not entered their mud-built cottages. Our provincial literatures, therefore, are not a true index of the life of a very large majority of the people. It follows that they are but a partial expression of the national life, on the one hand, as they are partial, on the other hand, in the sense of their not having taken root in any particular pattern of life or postulate of any of the hierarchy of Life's light-giving values.

So there is a common denominator underlying the various provincial literatures, namely, their urban character with its stress on some of the sectarian values of life, so to speak, as one may well characterise the bread-earning and freedom-winning trends seen at work in them.

They should first of all, then, be brought together on the basis of a united front against poverty and slavery. If freedom is the food of the Soul, bread is the food of the body. The authors, therefore, should dwell upon these necessities of the nation—and they are urgent necessities, indeed—irrespective of parochialism of any kind in their treatment. For the Tamilian is as much in need of bread as is the Bengali, just as they both are yearning for the freedom of the Motherland.

Secondly, the authors of the various provinces should pay more than the scant attention they have paid so far, to rural life. For, as they do so, they will discover once again the underlying cultural unity of India. And this, then, they can emphasise in their works.

Thirdly, in each province there should be a group of writers who study sufficiently well one other principal language of India, beside their own mother-tongue, so that reading the standard works in their second language they may translate some of these into their own, thus spreading knowledge of their fellow-countrymen living in other parts of India.

Fourthly, there ought to be a Central Board of Literature, some organization like the P.E.N., whose function it would be to publish in English the principal works in the various provinces, so that the English-knowing section of the population may first consolidate in their own selves their sense of unity as Indians and then through their own example filter it down gradually among the masses.

Fifthly, in each province there should be a nucleus of authors whose definite objective it will be to embody in their creations the main currents of thought in India's age-long history, bringing out the special contribution made by each province to the corpus of the country's culture and evoking an appreciation for its significance and synthetic value.

Sixthly, some of the *littérateurs* of one province should contact some of the *littérateurs* of the neighbouring province periodically at literary conferences and *conversazioni*, which should have a definite programme for purveying cultural wares and presenting current problems to the masses through the stage and the rural broadcasting service.

These are some of the suggestions for co-ordinating and consolidating the Indian literatures as a force and factor for emphasising and integrating the truth of the oneness of India, in spirit. For, no logic-chopping argument can blot out of existence this illuminating truth of the national life. The diversity of the country's literatures is but an expression as it is also an enrichment, of their unity in allegiance to the many-sided truth. As a medieval mystic has said:—

“There may be different kinds of oil in different lamps, the wicks may also be of different kinds, but when they burn, we have the same flame and illumination.”

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The Afternoon Session concluded at 5 p m.

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## **PART II**

**SECOND DAY: Sunday, 21st October 1945**



## Morning Session . 9 a.m.

The Second Day's proceedings commenced at 9 a.m. under the presidency of Sir S. Radhakrishnan, one of the Vice-Presidents of the P E N All-India Centre. Mrs Sarojini Naidu, the President, was also present Sir S Radhakrishnan called upon Mrs Gertrude Emerson Sen to initiate the discussion on " Popularization of the Indian Literatures Outside India "

### DISCUSSION ON " POPULARIZATION OF THE INDIAN LITERATURES OUTSIDE INDIA "

MRS. GERTRUDE EMERSON SEN

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen :—

In inviting me to speak on the popularization of Indian literatures outside India, our illustrious Founder\* probably expected me to offer some helpful suggestions about how Indian literary achievements could be made better known in the West today. I must confess to having discovered a loophole of evasion in the wording of my assignment She did not say " West " or " countries of the West, " nor did she introduce any awkward reference to time. This permits me to approach my theme by the round-about way of the past, for which I share much of the enthusiasm of a certain youthful Muslim friend of mine, the thirteen-year-old son of one of India's most distinguished historians. Once I happened to ask him if he could tell me a few stories of Muslim boy and girl heroes and heroines of Mughal times "I am not interested in the Mughal period I am only interested in the ancient Hindu period," he replied. I then learnt that he was busy amusing himself by translating Asokan edicts from Pali into Urdu! Yet the past literary traffic of India—a remarkably one-way traffic—can perhaps throw some

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\* Madame Sophia Wadia.

guiding light on the problem of modern translation and popularization, and our conscious attempt to open up abroad a new foreign commerce in Indian letters

I wonder if the literary productions of any country were ever exported in such quantity or exercised such a civilizing influence upon foreign countries as those of India over a period of at least fifteen hundred years, from the middle of the third century B C to about the beginning of the thirteenth century A D ? The islands stretching eastward from Ceylon to the Philippines, the whole of Southeastern Asia, the vast region of Central Asia, Nepal and Tibet, and the still more distant China, Korea and Japan, were all laid under a heavy literary debt to India in the formative periods of their cultural history. Nor did India's contributions stop here. Arabia and Persia made extensive borrowings, and Arabia passed on a good deal of what she took, to Europe in the Middle Ages. Works of Indian creative genius were studied in their original languages by foreign scholars, and at the same time great schools of translation grew up, so that the uneducated masses might also become familiar with them. When indigenous literatures also sprang up, they mostly began by being frank imitations of Indian models. So, by an apparently effortless process of transplantation, Indian wisdom and learning, Indian mythology, Indian tales intended to amuse or edify, Indian drama and poetry, Indian technical treatises of all sorts, took root and flourished in many alien soils, and became the heritage, not of India alone, but of the greater part of Asia.

First a word about languages. India's early literature was disseminated through three closely allied languages, Sanskrit, Pali and Prakrit, each associated with a particular script, of which there were local variants. Sanskrit, of course, was India's traditional language of orthodox religion and Brahmin learning, and carried with it the greatest prestige, and it was Sanskrit that travelled furthest and widest. There was a time, between the seventh and eleventh centuries A D, when it was being studied from Java to Japan, from China to the Abbasid capital at Baghdad. But the ancient speech of Magadha, wisely adopted by the Buddha for popularizing his message, acquired wide currency as the generally accepted

literature was diffused in distant lands by stray entries found in the methodical Chinese dynastic histories and in the early pilgrim narratives, as well as in the numerous Sanskrit inscriptions and Buddhist votive tablets inscribed in Pali, which have turned up in remote jungles. Temple walls with sculptured or frescoed illustrations of Indian literary material offer more direct evidence, and finally there has come the discovery of actual manuscripts in some of the areas under discussion.

Indian or Indianized colonies and kingdoms appear to



have been scattered all along the periphery of the motherland. No doubt priests and monks followed in the wake of traders, adventurers and exiled princes, and it was they who carried with them the torch of Indian learning. In the Chinese Annals, for example, we are told of a naval battle off southern Cambodia in the first century A.D., in which the forces of a Brahmin named Kaundinya defeated the fleet of the reigning queen. Kaundinya afterwards chivalrously married the queen and became the founder of the kingdom of Funan, which lasted for some six centuries. The Chinese historian presently enters this informative note: "More than a thousand Brahmins reside there. People follow their doctrines and give them their daughters in marriage. They read their sacred books day and night." Or again, we learn that in the little Malayan state of Lang-ya-su, not yet exactly identified, "the precious Sanskrit" was generally known in the year 515. Malaya and Indo-China are fairly accessible to India, but Sumatra and Java had also established strong cultural ties with India even before this time. And what of distant Borneo? Three Sanskrit inscriptions in an archaic fourth century Pallava Grantha script have recently been discovered there. They tell, in faultless Sanskrit, of King Mulavarman's great Vedic sacrifice, accompanied by his gift of 20,000 cows to the Brahmins. Many such inscriptions have turned up, and added together they prove that Indian culture had permeated the whole of Southeastern Asia by the fifth century A.D.

A tropical climate, like that of Southeastern Asia, is not inclined to be kind to palm-leaf or birch-bark manuscripts, of which India itself has preserved none older than the Pali period. Fortunately, stone is less perishable, and stone documents, wherever they are found, give indisputable evidence of the penetration of Indian iconographic and literary influences. The world-famous Buddhist monument of Borobudur, in Central Java, dating from the eighth century, is adorned with relief-carvings which are illustrations of well-known Mahayanist texts. If the illustrations are there, obviously the texts were also known. The buried basement plinth illustrates the *Karmavibhaga*, a work on the effects of good and bad actions—how, for instance, the eaters of turtle soup in one life

themselves become the cooked and eaten, in another! The legendary and historical life of the Buddha, traced in the splendid panels of the first gallery, is drawn directly from the Jatakas, the *Lalitavistara* of Asvaghosa, and the *Jataka-mala* of Ariyasura. The second, third and fourth galleries illustrate the *Gandhavyuha*, a Mahayanist work which became very popular, particularly in Nepal. This recounts the 110 travels to various parts of India of the youth Suddhana, in search of Enlightenment, and his attainment of the quest with the divine help of the Bodhisattva Maitreya. Java has another magnificent series of narrative reliefs at Larajong-grang temple, in the Prambanan valley, not far from Borobudur. They tell the story of the *Ramayana*, up to the building of the bridge to Lanka. The *Ramayana* was again to form the subject for sculptured decorations at a late fourteenth century temple in eastern Java. Here, at the courts of the eastern Javanese kings, in about the twelfth century, Sanskrit gave way to Javanese. But the Javanese law-codes were only Manu slightly modified. The epics reappeared in Javanese versions, and Javanese Kavyas had the identical themes of the Sanskrit Kavyas. The Indian epic heroes were simply transformed gradually into national Javanese heroes and, in spite of the Islamic conquest of the sixteenth century, they have continued to play the principal rôles in the popular Javanese dance-dramas and puppet-shows. The little island of Bali, to an even greater degree than Java, has retained its mixed Hindu-Buddhist inheritance—or had, up to the time of the Japanese occupation four years ago!

Far to the north, the Cambodian kingdom of the Khmers offered another striking example of Indianized culture. The Khmers overthrew Funan in the sixth century, and by the twelfth had carved out a kingdom for themselves which reached from Burma and the Bay of Bengal to the China Sea. Near their ancient capital of Angkor Thom, even in its ruined condition one of the marvels of the world, is a vast stone temple with a flagged causeway 2,000 feet long, a moat 600 feet wide and three miles round, and a full half-mile of gallery-walls covered with an incredible stone tapestry depicting scenes from the *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata* and the Puranas. Here the main panels are each ninety to a hundred yards in

length. It is an eloquent tribute to the vitality of Indian ideas that perhaps the greatest Buddhist monument and series of sculptured Buddhist texts in existence are found in Java, while the greatest of Hindu monuments is in Indo-China.

The Khmers also left numerous Sanskrit inscriptions which testify to their intimate knowledge of Sanskrit literature. These mention, or directly quote from, the Vedas, Puranas, *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata*, *Harivamsa*, Yoga and Nyaya philosophical systems, Manu, Panini, Patanjali, Susruta, Gunadhyaya, Mayura, Vatsayana and Kanada. Several Tantric texts are also specifically mentioned by name. The temples and images of deities are clear evidence that the Silpasastras were also well known, and inscriptions and sculptures show that the Khmers were familiar with Indian works on music and dancing. In Khmer descriptions of the martial music to which the armies marched forth to war, thirteen musical instruments are given their traditional Sanskrit names. Moreover, the thoroughly Indian institution of non-stop public recitation of the great Sanskrit epics is referred to more than once, and gifts of beautiful books to temples are mentioned. All the great Khmer temples had stone libraries attached to them, which were obviously once well-stocked with Sanskrit manuscripts. The empty ruined libraries are still there, but the manuscripts, alas, have all disappeared, destroyed for ever in the Siamese wars of the fourteenth century, which ended the mighty kingdom of the Khmers.

Thanks to desert conditions somewhat resembling those of Egypt, there have been exciting finds, within this twentieth century, of real manuscripts from sand-buried sites all over Central Asia. Little oases kingdoms formerly punctuated the ancient Silk Road to China, and here, until the Turks swept eastward in the eighth and ninth centuries, a civilization flourished which is now known to have been chiefly Indian in its religious and intellectual inspiration, Iranian in its social structure and court life, Chinese in its material background and prosperity, and a mixture of all three, in its artistic expression. Literally thousands of written documents, in a dozen languages and scripts, on wood, leather, bamboo, palm-leaves, birch-bark, silk and paper have been dug up from the debris of ruined towns, from forgotten

military outposts of Han times, strung along the extension of the Great Wall reaching far out into the Taklamakan desert, from stupa foundations and lost cave-monasteries, many of them with beautiful unfaded frescoes of huge dimensions, illustrating the Jatakas and early Mahayanist works. The most ancient written records of this region are in Chinese, on bamboo tablets, and go back to the 2nd or 3rd century B C. The next earliest are Prakrit documents on wood, in the form of official letters and contracts. Then come Sanskrit and Prakrit manuscripts, on palm-leaves and birch-bark, of the second century A D. One is a Prakrit version in Kharoshthi of the *Dhammapada*, the famous anthology of the Buddha's sayings, which forms part of both the official Pali and Sanskrit Canons. It was found at Khotan, and was the first Buddhist work to turn up in Kharoshthi script. At Turfan, further east, fragments of three Buddhist dramas were unearthed. One of them in its colophon names Asvaghosa as its author. He lived at the court of Kanishka in about 100 A D, and it appears that his dramas, the earliest examples of Sanskrit drama yet known, had already travelled half across Asia even within his lifetime. An interesting fourth century manuscript recovered from Kucha is a Sanskrit medical treatise in seven parts. It contains extracts from many ancient Indian authors, including 28 quotations from Charaka and six from Susruta. It also gives a charm against snake-bite attributed to the Buddha in one of the Jatakas.

No doubt the richest haul of these early manuscripts fell to the French archæologist Paul Pelliot and the late Sir Aurel Stein. They gathered their amazing harvests from a secret walled-up library within the cave-monastery of Tun-huang, on the border of China. It was found to contain 20,000 manuscript rolls and loose documents, and 554 votive paintings, mostly of the Tang period. Part of the collection is now to be seen in the Asia Museum at Delhi. The Tun-huang manuscripts—Canonical works, histories, monastic and official records—range in date from the fifth to the tenth century. They are chiefly in Chinese and Tibetan, but no less than 3,000 are in Sanskrit and in Central Asian Brahmi.

The early Chinese pilgrims who journeyed to India by the overland route in search of authoritative texts have left

vivid descriptions of the great Buddhist monasteries, housing thousands of monks, where they were hospitably received all along the way. These were the busy hives of industry where for many centuries manuscripts of every description were copied and recopied and translated from one language into another. The names of a number of translators have been preserved in the Chinese accounts, such as Dharmaraksha of Tun-huang, Kumarajiva of Kucha, and many more. Dharmaraksha, who is said to have known as many as 36 languages, went to China in 284 and for thirty years worked on the translations of some 200 Sanskrit texts, of which 90 are still extant. Kumarajiva, the son of an Indian minister and a Kuchan princess, first studied Sanskrit in Kashmir, and then set about making translations into Kuchan. About the end of the fourth century he was carried off to China with a retreating army. Nothing daunted, he learned Chinese and began the translation of Sanskrit texts into that language. The most important of them was the *Saddharma Pundarika*, or Lotus of the True Law, which became the favourite Mahayanist text of the Further East. Altogether, over a period of about seven centuries, some 168 Chinese monks are known to have set out on the adventurous journey to India to collect manuscripts and pay their respects to the holy places of Buddhism. During the same period, 76 monks travelled to China from India and Ceylon, 30 from Parthia, 16 from Khotan, Kucha and other Central Asian kingdoms, two from Java and Cambodia. The nameless travellers must have numbered thousands. One cannot assume, however, that good intentions and zeal qualified all the translators for their work. There was a monk Prajna who arrived in China from North-western India in the year 780. He and one Adam, Nestorian Bishop of Chang-an (the modern Sian-fu), set about translating into Chinese a seven volume Mongolian version of a certain Sanskrit Buddhist sutra. When the work was finished and presented to the Emperor for examination, the latter found fault with it and declared the translation to be rough and obscure. This was after all not very surprising, in view of the fact that Prajna, as it turned out, knew neither Mongolian nor Chinese, Adam, neither a word of Sanskrit nor anything whatever about Buddhism !

The polyglot Buddhist kingdoms of the Central Asian oases, the vñile kingdom of the Khmers, the powerful contemporary Hindu kingdom of the Chams (now Annam), the great seventh-century Sumatran Buddhist kingdom of Sri Vijaya, and many other early centres of Indian culture, have vanished, and only the archaeologists now prow! among the ruins, seeking for traces of their one-time glory. But in at least two great neighbour countries, Nepal and Tibet, the Indian traditions are still very much alive. Here the political policy of exclusiveness, plus the physical exclusiveness of mountain ranges 20,000 ft. high, has no doubt helped to preserve intact the ancient types of civilization, or at least to save them from too rapid Westernization. It has been difficult for scholars to get at their libraries, but enough is known for the world to realize that the Durbar Library at Kathmandu and the sealed libraries of the great fortress monasteries of Southern Tibet contain innumerable hidden treasures. The Indian Buddhist, Rahula Sankrityayana, who managed to visit Tibet three times within the past ten or fifteen years, has brought back copies and photographic plates, or in some cases the original manuscripts, of a great number of highly important Sanskrit works—among them, some by the famous brothers Asanga and Vasubandhu, and Dharmakirti the logician. He has also located Tibetan translations of many lost Sanskrit originals, and several of them are now being retranslated from Tibetan back into Sanskrit. Tibet is thus paying off a part of her ancient literary debt to India.

The whole of the Tibetan Buddhist Canon is, of course, nothing but a vast collection of translations from Indian Sanskrit works. The task of translation began from the time when Buddhism was first introduced into Tibet in the seventh century by a princess of Nepal and a princess of China, who became the two principal queens of the Tibetan emperor Srong-bstan-Gampo. All these translations were finally put into chronological order and divided into two sections, known as the Kanjur and the Tanjur, by Bu-ston in the sixteenth century. To give an idea of the immense mass of material they cover, it may be mentioned that the Kanjur, supposedly representing the actual words spoken by the Buddha, consists, in its printed form of today, of 108 volumes, containing

more than a thousand different texts. As for the Tanjur, perhaps nobody has ever taken the trouble to count the total number of commentaries, treatises on grammar, logic, philosophy, medicine, poetry, mysticism, and so forth, which are contained in its 225 volumes. Nepal and Tibet, along with Kashmir, offered an asylum to distinguished Indian scholars and writers at a time when India itself was being overrun by the fanatical armies of Mahmud of Ghazni and Muhammad Ghorī, between the eleventh and thirteenth centuries. The high standards of Indian intellectual achievement were kept alive in these countries, when Nalanda and Vikramasīla had already gone up in smoke.

Rather too solemn and serious, it may well seem from a modern point of view, is all this emphasis on religion, philosophy, grammar and law, and endless poetic tales of gods and divinities, passed on from India almost without change to other countries of Asia. But there was another side to the picture. Western Asia was not much interested in Hinduism or Buddhism. At about the time when Indian influence was attaining its maximum expansion in foreign lands, Western Asia had just been converted to the religion of Islam. As far as India was concerned, the Muslims were attracted primarily by India's great material riches. Yet the Caliphs at Damascus and Baghdad entertained a wholesome respect for Indian scientific knowledge, and the Siddhantas and mathematical works of Varahamihira and Brahmagupta, as well as the medical works of Charaka and Susruta, were translated into both Arabic and Persian, and so, superimposed on the Greek foundations of Arabian science, were made to contribute important elements to the general scientific knowledge of the Muslims. It is enough to remind ourselves that it was India who invented the decimal system and the zero, and hit on the brilliant idea of a place-value system for numerals, in contrast to the clumsy Greek and Roman methods of counting—inventions eagerly taken over by the Arabs and later passed along to Europe—to realize the whole world's indebtedness to India in the field of mathematics. But scientific studies were naturally reserved for the intellectual aristocracy, the men of genius, like al-Berūnī. It was the popular travellers' tales, stories of Indian origin brought back by sailors

and merchants, or exchanged round camp-fires on long caravan journeys from one country to another, which had a universal appeal, and which ultimately found a place for themselves in such famous collections as the *Arabian Nights* or the *Kalilah wa Dimnah*.

The interesting migrations of the second of these works show how easily and naturally good stories will always travel. The original source was possibly a long-lost version of the *Panchatantra*, a Sanskrit work composed in prose and verse, which as it exists today was certainly composed before the fifth century, most probably in Kashmir. Many of the stories of the *Panchatantra* were already familiar in the Pali Buddhist Jatakas, but in the Sanskrit version they have been shorn of any particular Buddhist flavour and are merely presented as admirable lessons in statecraft and worldly wisdom—the class of literature called *Niti-Sastra*. Animals are the delightful actors, and the Arabic version of the *Panchatantra* takes its title from the names of two jackals who play a leading rôle in one of the stories. The Sanskrit book is said to have been sent as a present in the sixth century, along with the game of chess, to the Persian king Khusrau I. It was quickly translated into Persian, and then into Arabic and Syriac. The Arabic text was retranslated into Greek in the eleventh century, and into Hebrew, Latin and Spanish in the thirteenth. The Latin version bore the curious title of *Æsop the Old*—apparently an attribution made on the assumption that fathering the work on the half legendary Greek author of the sixth century B. C., also supposed to have been a writer of animal fables, would add to its prestige. Finally, from the Latin, the Indian stories made their way into medieval Europe. Many of them were reborn in such popular collections as Boccaccio's *Decameron* and Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, both of the fourteenth century, La Fontaine's *Fables* of the seventeenth, Grimms' *Fairy Tales* of the eighteenth, Hans Andersen's of the nineteenth—and so, eventually, into every nursery of Europe and America!

Another literary peregrination from India produced an even more astonishing result. In the eighth century, a certain Greek Christian, afterwards known as St. John of Damascus, happened to be holding a minor official post in



Baghdad, at the court of al-Mansur, just at the very moment when the *Panchatantra* was being translated into Arabic. Making use of this, and also, it is now perfectly clear, some unknown Arabic copy of the Jatakas, he produced a Greek religious romance, *Barlaam and Josaphat*. It purported to tell the story of an Indian prince, Josaphat, converted to Christianity by the hermit Barlaam. Josaphat afterwards renounced the world and its miseries and became a holy ascetic. His glorious conversion, as described by St. John of Damascus, caught and fired the imagination of the whole of Christian Europe. The romance had soon been translated into Latin, French, Italian, Spanish, German, English, Swedish, Dutch, and even Icelandic! Prince Josaphat also found his way into the official Martyrologies of the Catholic Church, and in the sixteenth century the Indian Prince was finally actually canonized as a holy saint of the Catholic Church! It has remained for the modern Orientalists to discover that the author drew upon the life of the Buddha, which forms the introduction to the Jatakas, for his main inspiration, wove in other tales from the Jatakas and *Panchatantra*, and then gave the story a Christian disguise. In other words, Josaphat is simply the Bodhisat, and it is Gautama Buddha who has been metamorphosed into a Christian saint!

Such are just a few of the literary impulses of early times, outward bound from India. In those days, the surrounding countries, compared to India, were very largely represented by an intellectual vacuum. Like water naturally flowing downhill, the great works of Indian literature, both priestly and secular, and the great Indian ideas they embodied, flowed out in every direction to fill the vacuum.

A time came, however, when the old fountains of inspiration began to dry up in India itself. Sanskrit became a vested interest of the Brahmins or, at any rate, of the pedants. The modern Indian languages and literatures were already in the making, but had not yet reached maturity, and the dead weight of traditional learning acted as an effective brake on the emergence of new ideas or the creation of fresh types of literary expression. Al-Beruni, the great Arabian scholar who visited India in the first years of the eleventh century, and who felt the utmost respect for India's

gigantic achievements in the past, put his finger on the cause of the intellectual stagnation and aridity, which he noted, at least in the Punjab. "Hindus," he wrote, "believe that there is no country like theirs, no nation like theirs, no kings like theirs. Their haughtiness is such that if you tell them of any science or scholar in Korasan or Persia, they will think that you are both an ignorant and a liar." With this attitude, it is scarcely surprising that progress could no longer be maintained, and perhaps had already come to a standstill before the political and social upheaval of the Muslim conquest brought to an end the great period of classical Indian culture. As a result, Asia henceforth looked elsewhere for her inspiration.

Then the curtain lifted again and, for a brief moment, it seemed that the turn of Europe had come to share the best of Indian literature. When the hidden and unsuspected mystery of Sanskrit literature was first revealed to the West in the eighteenth century, the early English Sanskritists, like William Jones, Charles Wilkins and H. T. Colebrooke, grew ecstatic in their praise. A Dutch Jesuit translated the lyrics of Bhartrihari. A Frenchman put into Latin Dara Shukoh's Persian rendering of the Upanishads. A servant of the East India Company, taken prisoner in France during the Napoleonic wars, taught Sanskrit to some of his fellow prisoners, including the German Schlegel. Schopenhauer was on fire with the thought that a new Renaissance had dawned, or was about to dawn in Europe, on account of the fertilizing agency of Indian thought. But the sun did not rise. The emphasis and enthusiasm were all too soon relegated to the somewhat dusty field of philology, a new science opened up by the discovery of Panini's grammar, and of the root relation between Sanskrit and the European languages. But in the New World, Emerson, who had originally imbibed his enthusiasm from his friend Carlyle, continued to send forth in stirring words the high spiritual message of the Atman, which he had first heard from India and then made his own.

Today, distance has ceased to have meaning, and with or without their wish, countries are being brought ever closer together. Many thousands of foreign soldiers have been stationed in India during the recent war and are now return-

ing to their homes. The conditions of their service have scarcely permitted them to learn much about India, but they cannot escape carrying away with them varied impressions and interests, and some among them will certainly wish to learn more about India in the future. Politically, India is forcing itself upon the world's attention, and the repercussions will inevitably mean an awakened inquiry and desire to understand this land and its people. It seems, therefore, that a new phase of dynamic literary exchanges is already on the horizon.

Summarized in the briefest possible space, what are the problems to be faced? Classical languages hitherto studied in the West, Greek and Latin, are no longer compulsory at most universities, and it is not likely that more than a handful of Western scholars at any one time will ever seriously interest themselves in Pali and Sanskrit. On the other hand, there is at least a growing desire among intelligent foreigners to become acquainted with Indian history and Indian religion and philosophy, through the original sources as reinterpreted by Indians themselves. There is a modern technique, for example, in such a work as René Grousset's *In the Footsteps of the Buddha*—a book which closely follows the original Chinese account by Yuan Chwang of his journey across Central Asia and through India in the seventh century, but which at the same time gives the reader the benefit of the author's modern perspective and knowledge of history, art and philosophy. Translations must come from Indians, who are after all best fitted to make them. As for the modern languages of India, with the change-over to an independent India, soon there will be not even a specialized body of English I.C.S. officials any longer familiar with the languages of the different provinces. Unfortunately, the British on the whole are bad linguists, and so they have conveniently decided that it is up to the rest of the world to learn English. This the world is doing as rapidly as possible, and the proof lies in the fact that even in India, at this All-India Writers' Conference, we are all speaking in English. English has actually established its claim to be considered as the youngest of Indian vernaculars. And what is true for India is equally true of countries like China and Japan. We must therefore

assume that if Indian literature, classical or modern, is to reach a wider public, it must be through the medium of English, and very largely through the labours of Indian writers or translators. From English, of course, books can be easily enough retranslated into other languages.

The question arises, how is the liaison to be established between Indian authors and Western publishers? I have one or two practical suggestions to make. The competition will be very keen and there is no hope for mediocre work, of which there is already enough, and more, 'in the West'. In the United States alone, some 5,000 books are published yearly—an average of about 14 a day! There must be intelligent selection, and Indian publishers and societies can help in this respect. If Indian publishers would specialize more, their lists would become associated with definite types of books, instead of the heterogeneous mixture of today, and would more easily catch the attention of foreign publishers, for foreign editions. Fiction, of course, is a profitable and popular field of writing, but what is wanted of Indian fiction is a penetrating psychological analysis of true Indian types, and a presentation of important aspects of Indian life, not a mere phonograph record of endless trivial conversations. Biography and autobiography also deserve vastly more attention than they get. If some sort of Indian Academy of Letters would put its stamp of approval on the best works of creative writing produced in India every year, such works, I am sure, would find a very ready public overseas. In other words, why should not the P.E.N. itself take a hand in recommending books considered worthy of India?

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SIR S. RADHAKRISHNAN:

We had an excellent paper from Mrs Sen on the influence of the Indian literatures outside India across the centuries. The easy familiarity, the wealth of information, with which she illustrated her points have unpressed us all very much. It is only natural that some people would like to take part in the discussion,—especially ladies. I find here three names, and I hope, so far as this discussion is concerned, there will be only three and no more.

MISS BHARATI SARABHAI \*

Friends :—

When I saw the subject of this discussion, I felt that it gave me an opportunity to share a dream of mine with you. It would seem as if there cannot be much connection between my dream and this subject. But I will try to show how vitally they are connected. When you think in terms of taking Indian literature outside India, to me it seems that an interest in the Indian people—not in the great sages or the great statesmen alone, but also in the common man, who has become a unique individual—will do a lot to make Indian literature something real. Now my dream is this. What I was thinking was, how wonderful it would be if people abroad could get a very clear idea of how Indians live in their home, how they move about in their streets, how the Indian family gets up in the morning, how the Indian woman or the Indian man or the Indian child reacts to different situations, all this, not only in an abstract or theoretical way, not only in a vivid imaginative way as marvellous word pictures can make our scenes live in distant places, but in a very *visual* way. How could this be done? It seems to me that perhaps one of the most powerful means of achieving this would be to produce a series of plays abroad. When I say a 'series of plays,' I have many types of plays in mind. For example, I have the classical play, then I have the classical play in modern dress, rather like *Hamlet* in modern dress; and it will be a very interesting experiment because it will show how far, to what extent, in spite of differences in values, we remain true today to the classical Indian spirit, how far, for example, any modern Indian woman could successfully present Sakuntala or Parvati or Droupadi. Then, again, let us take modern plays which portray contemporary home life, simple home life with a tempo which is truly Indian. There are Russian plays which have a tempo unmistakably Russian, once you begin to appreciate this kind of play, it becomes a part of you, you develop such a taste for it that there are times when you feel a certain homesickness for some other countries than your

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\* Speaking extempore .

own and their unique spirit—as for the Russian, or for the Chinese, or for the Irish. The modern plays I have in mind will have to be in English—they may be in some other European language, of course, but I think English is undoubtedly becoming the most important world language. The plays, then, will have to be in English. Our English need not necessarily be indistinguishable from 'English English'—it should be good English, but it should be true no less to the Indian rhythm of mind, the idiomatic Indian ways of thinking.

Further, I am very keen that the plays should be produced abroad by a group of Indian players. I cannot imagine any European or other foreigner, however imbued with the Indian spirit, being really able to convey to the world the authentic Indian spirit. Foreigners have great contributions to make in the enterprise of making India known abroad. But, whatever their background, when they go on the stage, they cannot give us that feeling of the Indian spirit showing through every gesture. I do not feel that the cinema could give the same living contact as the play could give. The cinema is important, of course; but to a group of accomplished intellectuals, seeing on the stage a set of Indian men and women will be much more valuable than what they could see at the cinema. So it all seems to me that one of the most vital ways in which we could make the Indian literatures popular outside India, make the Indian people a living reality to the people of the outside world, is by producing good plays in English and exhibiting them outside India.

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MRS HANSA MILITA \*

Mr President and Friends:—

After the very learned speech by Mrs. Sen, it is not necessary for anyone else to say anything on this question. Yesterday we discussed about literature as a unifying force. Literature is really the best medium for bringing people together, and this can be done only through translations. This was apparently recognized in the past, as Mrs. Sen told

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\* Speaking extempore

us - But recently there has been a tendency to ignore Indian literature. Our Sanskrit literature and philosophy have been translated into the various languages of other countries. But many great Sanskrit classics have not been properly introduced to the West, with the result that even some of the best Sanskrit poets are not known abroad. I remember I had occasion to read a paper in London before the East India Society on *Uttara Rama Charita*, Bhavabhuti's great masterpiece which excels, according to some, the best writings of even Kalidasa. But the West knows only Kalidasa, and Bhavabhuti is not even a name to it. It was an eye-opener to some of my audience when I told them that Bhavabhuti—at any rate, the Bhavabhuti of *Uttara Rama Charita*—was a very great writer indeed.

On another occasion, visiting the Carnegie Library for Children in New York, I found that while they had a fine collection of books, they had no books on India or from India. The librarian told me he had tried to get books on India—of course, the books have to be in English—but he could not get any. The average Westerner thus did not know anything, for instance, about the tales from the *Panchatantra*, the tales from the *Hitopadesa*, or the tales from the *Kathasaritsagara*, books written long before the States became famous or Andersen's tales came to be written. Translation is the only way to make our literature known abroad. Tagore was lucky enough to be translated into English. Some other writers were fortunate enough to be translated into good English, and therefore they are known to the outside world. I am sure we have got some very fine writers in our various Indian languages. I can certainly speak for Gujarati. Take a poet like Nanalal. He is a very fine poet, and I wish he could be translated into good English, so that the world could recognise his genius. Yesterday we were told by Mr. Ould that not all translations were useful. But it is only through translations that we can make our literature known to the world. Good or bad, we must have translations; and I, in my own humble way, have tried to translate some of the best English writers into Gujarati.

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DR. MR. SHAHIDULLAH <sup>1</sup>

President, Brother and Sister Delegates:—

I am here as an Indologist to express my full appreciation of the paper read by Mrs. Sen. That paper is a beautiful résumé of the subject. She has spoken of ancient India. But for modern India I think we have something to do, because the West is in colossal ignorance of Indian life and literature. And, therefore, it behoves the P. E. N. to undertake the translation of the best books in the different Indian literatures into the various important foreign languages. That is what I should urge

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DR. HERMANN GOETZ:<sup>2</sup>

Friends:—

Generally people are so much preoccupied with the impact of the West on this country that they completely overlook that such a cultural contact has also another, and in the long run much more important aspect. For historical experience shows that whenever an old high civilization has been vanquished by a younger power, it has finally conquered its victor in the cultural field, either assimilating the latter or giving birth to a new world civilization. Vanquished Greece conquered Roman life, subject Syria Christianized Europe, from the assimilation of the Turkish conquerors was born the golden age of Chinese civilization under the Tang dynasty, and the Splendour that was Ind under the Grand Moghuls. This phenomenon holds good also for our own time. For its reasons are always the same. The burden of empire entails an over-organization, finally a mechanization of all available forces. Earlier or later this mechanization must affect also personal life values and the spiritual background even of highly civilized nations, creating a hunger for new ideas and ideals to fill this vacuum.

“Western materialism” is the modern form of this

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<sup>1</sup> Speaking extempore

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Goetz spoke extempore, but he submitted later a paper on the subject, amplifying his arguments, and this paper is appropriately printed here.



general phenomenon, and its complement is a growing hunger for new cultural inspirations and for cultural contacts restoring the sources of life. Since the middle of the last century a swelling counter-current has become observable in Western life. Interest in Indian literature had begun, almost one and a half centuries ago, with William Jones, Southey and Goethe, in Indian philosophy with Schopenhauer and Emerson. To-day Western art has already been completely revolutionized under the influence especially of China and Japan, and now also the impact of Indian art becomes perceptible. Since Henri Bergson and Berdyaev Western philosophy has come very near to the ideas of Vedantism. Thus it can be no more surprising that at least some of the greatest masterpieces of Indian thought have already been acknowledged as classics on the book-shelf of almost every representative of modern cultural life. To quote only one of many, the late German socialist poet Ernst Toller writes as a political prisoner: "You asked me whether I read the Bible? The New Testament is to me, with the Buddha, with Lao-tse, with the *Upanishads*, one of the deep springs of mankind." Kalidasa's and Sudraka's dramas have gone over on the European stage with great success, and popular editions of selections from the *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana*, of Kalidasa, Sudraka, Jayadeva, Bhartrihari, the early Buddhist and some Mahayana scriptures have been sold out quickly in repeated editions, not to speak of the great number of scholarly editions and translations which all find their public. Thus the time is ripe for an intensified popularization of Indian literature in the modern world.

For it is likewise true that at present only the intellectual elite of Europe and America has been won, and that even to the educated majority India still is a strange and mysterious, incomprehensible world, such as it was to the ancient Greeks and the Arabs of the *Thousand and One Nights* stories. Such a mystery always shrouds far-distant and little known countries, but its traditional survival into our age of intensive communications and cultural contacts must be regarded as one of the chief reasons for the apathy or, more correctly, the helplessness of the Western public before the actual problems of this country.

India means to them magicians, mahatmas, snake charm-ers and similar "superstitions," or maharajas so far as they still represent the pomp and luxury of Mediæval days. From the soul of real India, the problems and sorrows, the intimate beauties and dreams of her life, the veil has only lately been lifted by the works of Rabindranath Tagore, Dr Coomaraswamy, Sister Nivedita or Mulk Raj Anand, and this revelation of India as a human cosmos has been one of the reasons of the great response they have found.

It might seem surprising that classical Indian literature which, as mentioned, has long been known outside India, has had only a limited appeal in this respect. The reasons are manifold. The feudal knight world of the *Mahabharata* could please only that, at present rather small, public which likewise enjoys the Homeric or old Teutonic, Norse or Slav epics and ballads. The deep human and religious interest of the *Ramayana* was completely overshadowed by the "strangeness" of a world of demons, monkeys and bears. Kavya poetry loses its charm in translations, becoming dull or indigestible under heaps of explanatory notes. The later popular poets Mira Bai, Chandidas, Vidyapati, Tukaram, Kabir, etc., actually have a strong appeal to the Western mind, as they have a surprising resemblance to the late Mediæval Christian mystic poets, Mechthild of Magdeburg, Jacobone da Todt, St. John of the Cross, who are still much read. But until recently these Bhakti singers were hardly known. Thus there remained only one group, from the so-human Upanishads and early Buddhist scriptures, especially the *Mahaparinibbana Sutta*, up to the earlier Sanskrit classics, Asvaghosha and Kalidasa. But the latter led into a fairyland which has enchanted Western readers and at the same time puzzled them, seeming incompatible with the India known. And the first deflected interest into the religious and philosophical field.

For it needs no repetition how much Indian philosophy has fascinated Western thought, though it needs perhaps some explanation. It is, of course, difficult to offer a brief interpretation for such a reaction which must be not less variegated than all the many aspects of the present cultural crisis. But the principal reason seems to be that Indian philosophy

just fills the abyss which at present yawns between science and religion. For the sacrificial philosophy of the Brahmanas had reduced the universe to an impersonal mechanism resembling that of 19th century physics, except that its causal principle had been magic. In the Upanishads, Buddhism, the *Gita*, and finally in the Vedanta, India had found the way back to another spiritualism. Reintegrated into modern thought the Vedantic vision can heal the present distraction of the world, weld together science and religion, and thus restore that mental balance without which our modern discoveries must become instruments of destruction instead of a blessing to mankind.

India thus has before her the opportunity of a great cultural mission in the modern world. But this mission is possible only through the living intellectual contact with other countries and nations. This contact is only possible if India ceases to be to the outside world a "mystery country," if other nations learn to understand her as a part of humanity, with all human hopes and shortcomings, ideals and sufferings. In order to be fertile, the Indian cultural heritage must be known, and in order to be accepted it needs an expression, if not a translation into terms which can be generally understood. And it needs a make-up which insinuates that background which a national work of art generally presupposes as known, but which to the rest of the world is veiled by innumerable "curious" differences of tradition. It is the eternal human appeal which has made Kalidasa, Valmiki, Shakespeare, Goethe, classics. It can be only through the elaboration of this human appeal that the soul of India, the beauty dream of her classics, the vision of her seers, can win a world which, in an age of mechanization, is in search of a soul.

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DR BHABANI BHATTACHARYA \*

The problem, at short range, resolves itself into one of popularization of our literatures, ancient as well as modern,

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\* Dr Bhattacharya's 'note' was submitted to the Conference and taken as read, and is hence here printed in its natural context

in England and the United States. Later, when India becomes a free nation, equal in status to the other free nations of the world, the problem will expand and become more complicated and yet essentially simpler, for in that very process of growth it will break its present restrictive bonds. In this brief note, I shall confine my remarks to the shape of things in England.

The inward make-up of the English people has hindered their interest in all foreign literatures. At a meeting of the Young P E N in London, I once met an English journalist who had not heard the name of Rabindranath Tagore. For a moment I was staggered by his ignorance. I could hardly believe my ears. After all, Tagore was not only the Poet of India, but he had a world fame and had made a permanent contribution to English literature itself. A man without literary interest could be excused if he had not heard of Tagore, but not a writer, who was also a member of an international association of writers. My surprise, however, waned quickly, for I recalled from my experience that the average literary-minded Englishman was unfamiliar with the names of other great contemporary writers—Knut Hamsun, Romain Rolland, Duhamel, Jules Romains and Thomas Mann, for instance—in striking contrast to his Indian colleague who has delved deep in world literature. The Englishman is insular in his literary taste, an isolationist—almost! He would prefer to see his own English life reflected even in a cracked sheet-glass mirror rather than turn his eyes to a clear image of alien life. One wonders if the War has atom-bombed that inherent insularity. I am not qualified to express a view, one way or the other.

The psychological trouble is very much worsened by the fact that India is regarded even by the intellectual classes of the British people as a possession, a bright jewel of the Crown. You would scarcely look for great gifts in one whom you had enslaved. Propaganda, direct and indirect, has played its part. The heritage of two centuries has created an inevitable blind spot in the British eye. Imperialism is twice accursed, for it debases the victor as much as the victim. No wonder that even Englishmen of the highest cultural integrity reveal an appalling ignorance and disinterest

in Indian life To the masses of the English people, India is a big red blotch on the map, a land full of tigers, and turbaned Hindus and red-bearded Muslims perpetually clawing each other. You would not expect works of art, streams of deep thought and nobly expressed emotion, from such a country

I suggest unhesitatingly that, if the above remarks hold good, the British section of the P E N owes a moral obligation to Indian literature, which is an expression of Indian life Its members should apply themselves to the urgency of the problem, which is morally as much their concern as ours, and they should strive to erect new and saner values to redress the balance of the old and decrepit.

Indian writers would be grateful if the British section of the P E N would take a concrete step in this direction by appointing a subcommittee who, in close contact with a similar body in this country, would explore the possibilities of a better appreciation of Indian literary works, a juster understanding

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## ADDRESS ON "MORAL VALUES IN LITERATURE"

Mrs Sarojini Naidu now called upon Sir S Radhakrishnan—"the man of words and wisdom," as she described him—to give his address on "Moral Values in Literature"

SIR S RADHAKRISHNAN \*

Madam President, Ladies and Gentlemen —

The subject was prescribed for me, and not selected by me, and as I reflected on it several lines of thought suggested themselves Literature is a form of art, as such, its aim is artistic satisfaction What have æsthetic feelings to do with moral values? Are values logical, æsthetic and ethical, are

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\* Professor Radhakrishnan spoke extempore, but in the paper printed here he has slightly amplified his arguments and has besides inserted the necessary foot-notes

the ideals of truth, beauty and goodness co-ordinate or are they subordinate aspects of one supreme value, the spiritual? How does the search for beauty aid the life of the spirit? In a short discourse it will not be possible for me to make any useful observations on these different questions. I shall content myself with a few remarks relating to some of the points raised in the speeches yesterday.

Sir Mirza Ismail, in his Inaugural Address, urged that, while literary men and women should concern themselves with the affairs of the time, they should not become politicians. "They must keep themselves untouched by the spiritual paralysis of politics. Theirs is a far higher order of vision and of service." This raises the question of the spiritual side of life and the bearing of politics on it.

In an ancient Upanisad, the Taittiriya, the cosmic evolution is represented by the five stages of matter (*anna*), life (*prāṇa*), perceptual-instinctive consciousness (*manas*), reflective consciousness (*vijñāna*) and spiritual bliss (*ānanda*). Human consciousness is at the fourth level of intellectuality; it has to grow into the fifth, of spirit. Looking back on the millions of years of the steady climb of life on the path of evolution, it seems presumptuous for us to imagine that, with man, evolution has come to an end. The evolution, on the physical side, is perhaps over. Progress hereafter is in our psychic. Animal cunning has become human foresight, self-consciousness. It must now turn to comprehension, thought must grow into spirituality, *vijñāna* into *ānanda*. The end and purpose of life is the attainment of clear, complete and creative consciousness. Even as the great Nature in which man is planted goes on, without haste and without rest, creating and re-creating, giving us a new day with every morning and a new life with every breath, man should go on creating and re-creating. The creative side of life is the spiritual.

The growth of the intellectual into the illumined consciousness takes place in the solitude of the human soul. To adapt a phrase of a great contemporary philosopher, Professor A. N. Whitehead, literature, like all art, is what a man does with his solitariness. There is a solitary side to human life, where we cherish thoughts unspoken, dreams unshared

and reticences unbroken It is the inmost side of man with his hopes and fears, loves and hates, ardours and ecstasies, despairs and disappointments, boundless horizons and indescribable exaltations It is the inside of our being, our soul, our true personality. That part of our being which is engaged in buying and selling, in managing estates and governing States, in expressing indignation and approval of movements and enterprises, is the outer, the social side of our life What is distinctive of man is the solitary side, which is peculiar, strange, uncommon, what one does not share with others When Indian thinkers call upon the individual to possess his soul, to be an *ātmavān*, not to get lost in the collective currents, not to be merged in the crowd of those who have emptied their souls, *ātmahano janāh*, they are asking him to preserve the dignity of his soul in the midst of the indignity of life

Politics, as understood at the moment, injures this soul side of life The increasing mechanisation which exalts force, money, numbers and the military spirit, suppresses the indefinable longings of the human soul The individual is sunk and swallowed up in the collective whole to which he adheres with blind loyalty Great streams of collective passion dominate and engulf him and even the best of us find ourselves helpless in the face of collective insanity We live in an age of the mechanised man, of mass beliefs and unbeliefs

This paralysis of the human spirit reached its perfection in the totalitarian systems Hitler had prophesied a few years back and his prophecy was fulfilled in the nightmare world he set up "I shall eradicate the thousands of years of human domestication I want to see again in the eyes of youth the gleam of the beasts of prey A youth will grow up before which the world will shrink" Hitler was helped by many literary men who used their talents to poison life and sterilise humanity Hitler is defeated and probably dead, but has the world abandoned his way of life, which overlooks the soul and regiments the intellect ?

Those who are unable to endure the nudity of spirit, the nothingness which seems to kill them, try to get away from their solitariness by taking up social pursuits Detective stories and cross-word puzzles, mass meetings and noisy

demonstrations, movies and circuses, attract their attention. They have neither the leisure nor the inclination to stare at the tender green of the spring or the beauty of the summer sky. By throwing themselves into the world's work, they hide from themselves their inward melancholy, the darkness of spirit, but they cannot be happy until order is brought into the chaos of their souls.

Art and literature of the highest type cannot flourish in a world where men are increasingly becoming mechanics and society a racket. The works of our famous literary men are hard and objective, forceful and penetrating. By submitting to scientific modes of thinking, they help to improve our knowledge and sharpen our sensibility. But they fail to provide us with an affirmation of the meaning of life, an enchantment of invisible mystery which is the sanction of value. They suffer from a secret sterility as the seeds of creative life are not deposited in them.

Even our greatest masters like Bernard Shaw and H. G. Wells do not touch the heights of genius. They have not given us one epic which brings out the full meaning of life, which leaves us throbbing with wild hopes and dazzled by new vistas, not a single drama of a profoundly moving nature which devastates us by its grandeur, burns into us unforgettable visions of men at grips with fate, which shakes, exhausts, cleanses us. It is because they deal with the tumult of the soul, not with its depth. They are predominantly intellectual, not spiritual. \*

There is a fundamental difference between science and art. The creative artist deals with the solitary side of human life, where each individual works out his unique vision. In regard to scientific inventions, we feel that they could be replaced. That America devised the atom bomb is an accident. Britain, Russia, Germany or even Japan, could have done it. If Columbus had not lived, America would still have been discovered. If Vasco de Gama had not rounded the Cape and opened a sea route to India, some one else would have done it. If Kālidāsa had not lived, there would have been no *Abhijñānaśākuntala*. Without Shakespeare, there would have been no *Hamlet*. These geniuses took up themes from earlier literatures and impregnated them with

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\* *An Idealist View of Life*, 1932, By the Speaker, Ch. V, page 161



their own intensity Masterpieces of literature and miracles of art are irreplaceable in an absolute sense, for they are the products of a unique union of the universe with the personalities of their authors The union has existed only once and yet has universal authority. There are institutes for scientific research but we cannot have institutes for training poets and prophets For science is a co-operative enterprise, the work of many minds, while art is the work of solitary genius

## II

Literature as a form of art along with philosophy and religion has the supreme function of awakening the spirit. Its essential aim is not so much to entertain or instruct as to kindle the spirit in us Great literature appeals not to reason but to spiritual perception It is not an argument but a spell, an incantation. It is not the criticism of life but the transforming of it. By gladdening the heart, by healing the tension of the soul, literature strengthens, ennobles and enlarges the life of the spirit It makes us see with the eye of spirit and fills us with awareness and compassion Its function is sacramental Indian thinkers claim that a poem is meant to lead us to the silent ecstasy of spiritual recognition or *ānanda* This delight is akin to the delight of realising the Supreme Spirit It is *brahmānandasahodara* The apprehension of Brahman, the Supreme Spirit, does not wait upon the evidence of the senses or the power of reasoning We perceive the truth in a moment of vision, when the self and the not-self, the subject apprehending and the object apprehended, are merged in a creative unity. God exists in reality but is not a fact and the individual apprehends the real in an act of transcendent perception, *alaukikaḥpratyakṣa*, when he stands remote, outside time, lost to the empirical happenings The reader or the listener has his mind stretched beyond the confines of his logical understanding and exceeds his little being not by the practice of asceticism but by the delight he experiences in the contemplation of the vision conjured up by the artist

If literature is the treatment of experience through the medium of words, the quality of the literature depends on the kind of experience handled. The naturalists who live on

the plane of observation, who strip the flesh of its clothing and expose it in the raw, stimulate the senses and excite the emotions. The rationalists explain to us through endless arguments the laws of the world and "instruct our ignorance," to use the words of Blake. The Greek Empedocles, the Roman Lucretius and many of our Indian thinkers describe metaphysical ideas in the form of verse. They deal with specialised problems, like nationalisation of mines, divorce reform or Marxist society. They communicate to us views, not visions, in tones shrill and exciting but they do not possess the faculty divine. They touch the vital or the intellectual elements in our nature as their own experience, which they interpret through the medium of words on the plane of either observation or ratiocination. They both live in a world of fragments. When we write from the vital or the intellectual level, our work will not have the power and the sovereign expression of our inmost self. We have thus different types of literature, a literature of sensations, a literature of ideas and a literature of spirit, of power, reflecting the different contents of our experience. The literature of power is written for the body, the mind and the soul. In it the distinction between the Dionysian, which stresses unbridled emotionalism, and the Apollonian, which stands for pure intellectualism, is transcended. Its aim is the integration of self, its reconciliation with the world, natural and social.

### III

No literature can achieve its true aim of expanding our consciousness, of increasing our awareness, if the author has not himself risen to the plane of spirit. If he has not the creative fire, he cannot kindle the fire in others. He must not only observe and argue but also see. The gift of right vision comes to those who have effected a profound change in their inner being, into whose nature has entered a spirit, calm, equal and ineffable. Human consciousness cannot act in its purity until it is released from the domination of desires and the separative ego. The artist must surrender his will, subdue his emotions, draw in all his thoughts and concentrate on the Essential Reality. Only then can he achieve maturity of mind and ripeness of wisdom. He who

is not a seer cannot produce great literature *nānrsih kūṇṇe kāvyam* The intense concentration of the mind is essential, not only for saintliness but for artistic creation The impulse for great literature comes from a higher consciousness The possession of our mind by a vaster spirit is the phenomenon of inspiration It is intensity of living, concentration on the object, which makes ideas take wings and embody themselves in rhythms or colours If a poet is lacking in intensity of vision, in inward grace, in chastity of spirit, he fails as a poet Creation implies suffering for the creator We who come after reap the joy which he won for us by his suffering. *Tapas* is not the passive suffering, however tragic it may be, the suffering of poverty, of disease and of degradation, of the injustice of fate, but the active suffering born of love, the burning passion to raise the lot of sorrowing humanity The greatest literary artists are dedicated spirits, priests of the vocation, who see themselves complete within themselves By submitting their whole being to a purpose beyond itself, they attain integrity

Man rises to godhead through *tapas* Before creation sets in, there is *tapas* or austerity, The world is built by the hands of numberless masters of compassion, raised by their sufferings and cemented by their blood *santo bhūmim tapasā dhūrayanti* It is these *tapasvins* that protect us from the greater misery and the deeper sorrow Vālmiki, our first great poet, is a *tapasvin*, a seer, and he from whom he derives illumination is the prince of seers \*

#### IV

There is a feeling that the seers find their ideal in the still eternities and are too little at home in the moving panorama Śankara observes that the individual has the realisation of the Absolute first and then the profound sense of the spiritual presence brooding over the entire universe *ādam brahmāsmiṭi anubhava udite, khalu idam brahma paścāt* The

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\* *tapas stadhvaya niratam tapasvī vag-īdam caram |*  
*Naradam pariṣapraccha Vālmikīr munipungatam ||*

(Vālmiki, the *tapasvin*, put a comprehensive question to Nārada, who is devoted to austerity and study, who is the foremost among the knowers of speech and a prince among silent sages )

Supreme Reality does not disdain to descend into the world of space and time. It is present in the clod and the worm, in the green field and the beautiful flower. While the abstract metaphysicians speak to us of the Reality behind and beyond the flux of the world, the poets speak to us of the many into which the radiance of the Supreme has split. Time and existence are not a veil screening eternity from our eyes, but a sacrament revealing it. The world is not a pointless triviality but the site for the building of the kingdom of God. The poets do not lose themselves in the static dream of the Infinite but are attracted by the seething arena of life. Nor is it to be thought that the seers are insensitive to suffering, to the heart and its holy affections. They are warm-hearted and compassionate and cannot see suffering on earth without themselves suffering. The pain suffered by the articulate flesh of the bird and the disconsolate cries of his mate pierced the poet's heart with such sorrow that he burst into song \*. These simple, sincere, sensitive souls, whom no wrong finds indifferent, illustrate the solidarity of life, the fellowship of pain. Vālmiki's sorrow sets him on the creative track and the *Rāmāyana* is the result. Solitude and sensitivity to the world's sorrow are two aspects of the same spiritual exercise.

It is not therefore a choice between spiritual seclusion and earthly life. We must seek freedom from the world not by ignoring its claims but by harmonising them with the spirit of the Eternal. Literature is not escapism. It is not turning away from the life of manifestation. Its function is to carry the message of the transcendent world to the empirical, through visions, rhythms and symbols. In Donne's great phrase, the poets 'contract the immensities' and communicate them to us. Vālmiki is interested not only in the Absolute beyond space and time but also in the plenitude of its manifestation in space and time. He is concerned about the supreme truth, the supreme good and the supreme beauty, not as metaphysical abstractions but as concretely embodied in unique persons. He wishes to turn the word into flesh, make the ideal real to sense. His dream of human

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\* *sahartasya pīavitto me sloko bhavati manyathā*

perfection is realised in Rāma <sup>1</sup> He asks Nārada to tell him of that person who has all the noble qualities, who has prowess, who knows what is right, who possesses gratitude, who is truthful in speech, firm in vows, who is endowed with good conduct, who cherishes the well-being of all creatures, who has wisdom, skill, attractive form, who is free from jealousy, whose wrath in battle may be said to fill the very gods with terror <sup>2</sup> Vālmīki in the *Rāmāyana* presents us with characters who are examples of what men ought to be, symbols of human nobility, types of human destiny whose very mistakes are to be noted and remembered <sup>3</sup>

By linking the two, the transcendent and the empirical, the universal and the individual, the literary artist is able to give unity to human personality. He takes up the ordinary themes and incidents of life and, in treating them, gives us glimpses into a better and nobler world than the one we see and pass our days in. Even when he treats of the blackest crime or the bloodiest battle, he relates them to the striving of the human soul. He accepts the changes of the world wrought by science and technology, uses them as new sources of inspiration to reveal new forms of beauty. In so far as mechanical improvements liberate the mind of man, they are welcomed by the artist. To him every object is unique. He is not lost in the world of appearances. He penetrates the appearances and grasps the essential reality of the object. So long as we rest on the plane of observation, our vision may

<sup>1</sup> *Ramo vīgrahavan dharmah sadhuh satyaparākramah*

<sup>2</sup> *konvasmin sampratam loke gūnavan kasca vīryavan |  
dharmañjanasca kṛtāñjas ca satyavakyo dhṛdhavratāḥ ||  
caritena ca ko yuktah saivabhīntesū ko hitāḥ |  
vidvan kah kah samarthas ca kascaikapriyadaśanah ||  
ātman ko jītakrodho dvyntīman ko anasnyakah |  
kasya bibhṛatī devas ca jatarosasya samjuge ||*

Cf. with this Aristotle's list of the 14 qualities of a perfect man: wisdom, justice, manliness, truth, a love of liberty, a sense of honour, magnanimity, resourcefulness, energy, intelligence, morality, magnificence, the capacity to arouse and keep affection and an integrated mind.

<sup>3</sup> It illustrates Dryden's account of a heroic poem, "The design of it is to form the mind to heroic virtue by example. It is conveyed in verse that it may delight while it instructs."

be a realistic one but it does not get at the essential reality behind and within appearances.<sup>1</sup> We must look through and not with our eyes, to use the words of Blake. Meister Eckhart says: "If you seek the kernel, then you must break the shell. And likewise, if you would know the reality of Nature, you must destroy the appearance, and the farther you go beyond the appearance, the nearer you will be to the essence." When Hamlet says "I have that within which passeth show," he speaks to us of the truth in him, of his essential being, that, just because it cannot be shown, requires imaginative sympathy for its understanding. Only by the exercise of intuition can we enter into the heart and mind of another. We can know another being not by noting the qualities observable by the senses, not by inferring the character according to the laws of logic, but by taking over the object into our own self. Intuitive knowledge goes beyond what perception and inference relate.<sup>2</sup> The subject abandons himself to the object, places himself inside it, lives its life, no more his own, "I live, yet not I," for the object lives in him. He does not so much think about the object as enter into its life. He breaks down the barrier between himself and the object by an effort of sympathetic imagination.

To grasp the essential reality of objects, absolute concentration, purity of vision is essential. Distraction must cease. The ardours of the mind and the passions of the heart must be uplifted in simplicity and we must be made one with the object. When the imagination is aglow, certain scenes burn to be written. There is an inevitability of thought and expression. We do not so much give to our vision a clothing in words but the vision burns and shines in words that flame with life. The verbal expression is more an incarnation than a clothing of the sensitive vision. The intensity of experience, the visionary power shines through words which would otherwise be commonplace. All great literature is the expression of inner vision, of illumined thought. It comes without volition or conscious knowledge. The more unconscious a

<sup>1</sup> "Facts," said Tristram Shandy, "may be learned by rote, but truth not."

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Yoga Sūtra* I. 48 - *śrutyaunmanaprajñabhyam anyavisaya visesaithatvat*.

creation, the more powerful is it. The greatest makers of literature are those whose vision has been the widest and whose feeling the most intense

## V

Creative literature does not aim at giving us thrills or providing us with lessons. Literatures which have such aims cannot have lasting influence. The artist does not write to help others or influence them. He writes to relieve himself of what is pressing in him. His work has an inevitability about it, an organic necessity. Such literature is not written with any moral purpose, but it will have a moral effect. It is never antiquated. Ethical treatises or didactic poems may not make us any the better. But works of art which are composed without any moral objective may inspire us with a deeper understanding and peace. *Hamlet* or *Othello* is not a play with a moral but either of them may give us a clue to the meaning of life. In the great domestic tragedies Shakespeare enlists our sympathy for the victims by holding up the mirror to life. The anguish and distraction of Hamlet are not unexpected. Claudius and Gertrude live adulterously, murder Hamlet's father, ascend the throne and deprive him of his succession. Hamlet is deeply wounded by his mother's guilt. The whole relationship of man to woman is corrupted in his mind by his mother's perfidy. He turns to Ophelia, condemns her as a predestined adulteress though there is nothing to warrant it. All womanhood has become abhorrent to him because it is associated with his mother. He asks Ophelia to get to a nunnery, drives her mad and brings about her death. The resentment which the thought of his mother evokes strikes him like a sword. "We will have no more marriages."

Hamlet "Is this a prologue or the posy of a ring?"

Ophelia "'Tis brief, my lord."

Hamlet "As woman's love."

His instinctive life is broken. His will-power is at its end. He is unable to reason logically and thoughts whirl through his brain. He wishes to escape from the 'cursed spite' of revenge and love. He looks at life and at death and wonders which is worse. "To be or not to be?"

Macbeth goes through a bath of blood and ends with a commentary on life that it is an idle tale full of sound and fury without any meaning. Othello kills his wife, kills himself and makes a complete hash of it all because a jealous villain worms himself into his confidence and plays on his weakness. Consider the condition in which these men are, tied into knots, seized by certain impulses which bind their movements, paralyse their powers of resistance and thought. They desire to struggle with the darkness that has fallen on their souls but the very stars in their courses seem to be fighting against them. They seem to be driven to their destruction. We find these terrible and yet acknowledge them to be sublime. Macbeth, Hamlet and Othello impress us not by their difference from us but by their likeness to us. Through these great tragedies Shakespeare impresses on us the unity of the human soul and its emotions behind the diversity of our ideas and customs. We are one in our emotional life, whether we have a white face like Hamlet or a black one like Othello. Great literature is the bond that connects man with man. In the pure atmosphere of creative imagination, man-made frontiers lose their meaning and the wounds of the heart are cleansed. The world is neither to be enjoyed nor endured but understood and re-created.

The primary purpose of literature is not to beguile hours of leisure or stimulate a refined enjoyment. Its calling is more serious and its object is to inspire and elevate man. Literature may not effect individual conversions or start social revolutions, but it changes the condition of our conscious being, it alters the configuration of our mind. The rhythmic power of words breaks down resistance, suspends criticism and makes the mind receptive to the artist's vision of truth. There enters into our nature something tranquil and elevating, a revelation of truth which lifts the mental into the spiritual. A thing of beauty refines and purifies us even without our knowing it. The insight of the seers is truth-filled. The makers of great literature are the truth bearers. *Itambharā*

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\* Cf Keats "We hate poetry that has a palpable design upon us. Poetry should be great and unobtrusive, a thing which enters into one's soul." *Poems of John Keats*, edited by E. de Selincourt (1926).  
p xxx.



*latra prajñā*<sup>1</sup> When the truth is conveyed to others, *dharma* or virtue grows Truth 'rains' virtue<sup>2</sup> Whatever tends to unify mankind is truth, whatever tends to disunite it is falsehood The true is therefore the good and the beautiful, while the false is the evil and the ugly Truth reveals to us that humanity is one, manifold and external However exalted thought may be, its ultimate issue is in action The attainment of truth consists in the growth of consciousness and is the supreme service of humanity By serving truth, we create joy and beauty and through such creation we build a new humanity Truth, though an individual achievement, has social effects Truth and virtue, *satya* and *dharma*, go together If we are engaged in the work of redemption of the world, it does not follow that we should reject the solitary side of life and crucify the soul Even Karl Marx found it necessary to renew his spirit by the study, at least once a year, of the works of Æschylus and Shakespeare

Moral virtues have differed in different ages but their essential spirit is humanity, compassion God is great because of his infinite love and compassion Literature induces the spirit of humanity and compassion<sup>3</sup>

## VI

Even a student of philosophy, who is expected to be detached and dispassionate, cannot ignore altogether the events of the time We have lived these years in close intimacy with the forces of evil, with the forms of man-made death We have had to contemplate acts that belong not to civilisation but to savagery, when law or justice or compassion had not begun to lift its voice against physical might Equipped with all the powers of modern technique, we have descended in this War to levels never yet touched by man We have become so inured to horror and violence that we accept them

<sup>1</sup> *Yoga Sutra*, I, 48

<sup>2</sup> *dharmaṃ uchatī sinatīti dharmameghaḥ*

<sup>3</sup> Bhavabhuti, in his *Uttararamacarita*, says

*eko rasah karuna eva nūmītabhedad bhīṣṇaḥ prthakprthag  
ivasrayate vitartan |  
acarita budbūdātaraṅgamayāḥ ūkātān anubho jathā salīlam  
eva hi tat samastan ||*

without repulsion, sometimes even almost without recognition. When the leaders of civilised nations use the atom bomb to blot out large cities while expressing the pious hope that it will "conduce to peace among nations," or "become a perennial fountain of life," one wonders whether it is true that mankind has a natural predilection for evil or whether the species of the good man has really perished from the earth. The matter for concern is not the cruelty and the barbarity, incredible as they have been, but the ease and eagerness with which large numbers of kindly and educated people embrace insane absurdities. The blood of the millions is hardly dry on the ground and we already hear the cries of the anguished peoples of Java, of Indo-China, of Palestine, not to speak of the suffering of subject peoples all over the world. If human nature can sink so low that we give the authority to the beast in us, if our highly developed science and morality are to be used for the development of the highest immorality, what is our future? As we see things, and reflect on them, we ask whether the life of reason, the control of feeling and action by the insights of reflective thought, whether it is all an idle dream, a vain hope or a practical possibility. The precious values of life which literature honours and fosters, peace and joy, friendship and love, individual perfection and spiritual development, seem to be the most fragile.

The present state of the world is the result of deliberate indoctrination. We offer to weary and impressionable men, men whose minds are divided by doubts, whose natures are disintegrated, opportunity to collaborate in a false and artificial unity. Patriotism is not an instinctive attitude but a cultivated emotion. It is imposed on each generation by education and environment. Even as we speak the language and profess the religion of our parents, we develop a love for our country. Jubilees, coronations, flag salutations and national anthems are employed to promote fanatical love of country and subservience to authority. We listen to the magic of words, we lose the habit of thinking for ourselves, we accept words like loyalty and patriotism as something holy and compulsive. We do not pause to ask, what is the proper object of loyalty? What is the true path of patriotism?

To gain the ends of patriotic chauvinism, we beat up filth and sentiment, boost up the fallen side of human nature, turn all human relations, family, sex, age, religion, upside down and darken the mind of the people. Literature in many cases has been the instrument of the passions and interests of the ruling classes. Many of us seem to share their narrow prejudices, to be afraid of the social changes which would undermine their position, and so fling ourselves into the arms of reaction. Religious fanaticisms of past ages are replaced by national and class feuds which are on an equally irrational plane of existence. We literary men, with few exceptions, miss the eternal aim and run after gods which are too low and too near.

The lessons of the second World War seem to be lost on the politicians who are trying to perpetuate their old policies of greed and hatred, which will again make a menace to the world. If this process goes on uninterrupted, this world will cease to be the home of the human species but become its grave.

I have been told that I am rather hard on the share of the intellectuals and writers in the desolation of the innocent. I wish most cordially that I were wrong. I am not unaware of the honoured names in the literatures of the world who are working in their silent way for the fostering of a world community. I may have overstressed the dark side of the picture but my motive is clear, I hope. The detonation of the atom bomb has made the meaning of history, the issue of life and death for all mankind, final and inescapable. There is no answer to it except in the regeneration of mankind. Brotherhood must cease to be a dream and become a reality. It is the most urgent political need, the only condition of security. Our brittle generation requires to be taught that civilisation is a vulnerable thing and that to defend it great vigilance and devotion are needed. Our stupidity is not incurable, our ignorance is not invincible. It is our duty to elevate the individual, to raise the downtrodden, to teach man to govern himself and impose a mental unity on his instinctive perceptions, to tell the nations that all are equal. War, which means ruined homes and dead cities, will continue so long as we submit to the slavery of patriotism, which is only a kind

of sectionalism True art, if it is taken seriously, can play a great part in the reintegration of this broken world. But is it not true that many of us used our gifts for teaching the young the glory of war, the mission of supermen, the virtue of the immolation of the individual for the State, the destiny of our nation to rule the world? Have we not given to our countries a soul which can be honoured, insulted, disgraced, saved or lost?

But War's a game, which, were their subjects wise,  
Kings would not play at Nations would do well  
T' extort their truncheons from the puny hands  
Of heroes, whose infirm and baby minds  
Are gratified with mischief, and who spoil  
Because men suffer it, their toy the world. (Cowper)

Kings, priests and statesmen, blast the human flower  
Even in its tender bud, their influence darts  
Like subtle poison through the bloodless veins  
Of desolate society The child,  
Ere he can hsp his mother's sacred name,  
Swells with the unnatural pride of crime, and lifts  
His baby sword even in a hero's mood,  
This infant arm becomes the bloodiest scourge  
Of devastated earth, while specious names  
Learnt in soft childhood's unsuspecting hour  
Serve as sophisms with which manhood dms  
Bright reason's ray and sanctifies the sword  
Upraised to shed a brother's innocent blood,  
Let priest-led slaves cease to proclaim that man  
Inherits vice and misery, when Force  
And falsehood hang even o'er the cradled babe,  
Stifling with rudest grasp all natural good (Shelley)

Have we not ourselves contributed to the intellectual indiscipline and moral anarchy which have led to the world's debasement and desolation? Look at the amount of patriotic, as distinguished from universal, literature we have produced in these inter-war years. Have we not taught the wrong way and accustomed the people of the world to call Alexanders and Napoleons, Fredericks and Catherines, the great of the world? Have not some of the contemporary writers sung the praises of Italy's 'civilising mission' in Abyssinia? From our past teaching will not our descendants be justified if they look upon Hitler and Mussolini as belonging to the species of great men? The empire builders from Sargon to

Hitler have been ruthless men filled with egotism, callous to the fate of others, tracking their cruel way through the blood of the people to their senseless ends. So long as we treat these pests of humanity as persons of distinction, are we not misguiding the innocent people of the world, producing a moral fog, a spiritual twilight? Men who thrust people into poverty and fear, who build empires on the slavery and subjection of large masses of men, it does not matter whether they are Russian or German, British or Japanese, French or Italian, they are not the benefactors of humanity. By our wrong teaching we have helped to maintain a combative temper and subordinate the pacific teachings of a Buddha or a Jesus. We must teach people to be less stupid and more intelligent and to put first things first. We must re-educate the world, in Burke's words "to rear to the most perfect vigour and maturity every sort of generous and honest feeling that belongs to our nature, and to bring the dispositions that are lovely in private life into the service and conduct of the commonwealth, so as to be patriots and not to forget we are gentlemen." We must do our utmost to transform the minds and morals of men, to make human beings rebel against the folly of this mad world, to make them realise that there is no return for the lives that are sacrificed, that there is nothing to redeem the grief of those who suffered the loss of their dearest ones. Their sorrow is absolute. If we do not emphasise the universal values of spirit, if we do not resist the encroachments of provincialism, whether of caste or class, race or religion, nation or empire, we are disloyal to our mission. Let us, through the weapons of reason and emotion, fight the vile enemies of mankind, battle for the dignity of man, for the great emancipation of humanity. Let us proclaim that human life is holy, that force is no remedy for justice, that peace, freedom and happiness are indivisible.

The War has shown that no people are self-sufficient even in material things, much less are they in the things of mind and spirit. We are all illumined by the same heavenly bodies as have shone upon other lives and other peoples, we are all threatened with the same pitfalls, troubled by the same passions and urges, ennobled by the same hopes and aspirations. Literary men and women can build up a fellow-

ship, devout in its admiration for what has been achieved in the past, yet believing in the richness of the future which lies before us all, a fellowship which transcends the barriers of race and nationality and yet honours the intellectual, artistic and spiritual traditions of a variety of peoples.

Literary artists should not accept external standards. They must serve only one master, truth, which casts out all fear. But writers are human beings and as such belong to particular communities and in a sense are bound by their standards. Even the highest reaches of individual insight are rooted in social experience and find their ultimate meaning in relation to the community. Though a great artist may reach a height of uniqueness which seems to transcend his social history, he cannot escape altogether from the influence of his social environment. He uses the tools and forms, the styles and insights of his time and place. The higher is his emotional insight, the higher is its universal validity. The great artists, though born in time, illumine the life of a timeless world. The greatest of them belong to the whole world—Vyāsa and Vālmīki, Homer and Virgil, Dante and Shakespeare use a universal perspective which makes all ages and all countries their debtors. Their purpose is not the expression of the life of their times but the desire and dream of that life. If a conflict of loyalties arises between the artist as a universal man and the artist as the citizen of a State or the member of a group, he must be prepared to suffer, as Socrates did, that the philosopher, the artist, the truth-seeker in him may not be violated. Our conception of the right may be wrong. We cannot claim to be infallible but we must act in accordance with the light in us. To do otherwise, to accept as guide an alien ideal with which one's conscience is not in harmony, would be to contradict oneself.\* Honesty of purpose and fidelity of statement are essential for true literature. Whatever we

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\* Cf. Marcus Aurelius "Whatever any man does or says, you must follow the guidance of your inner nature, not for any other man's sake, but for the sake of your own Nature. Just as though gold or emerald or purple were continually saying each to itself, whatever any man says or does, I must still remain gold or emerald or purple, keeping my own natural colour."

may or may not do, we must bear witness. If our social environment requires us to be disloyal to the *daimon* in us, civil disobedience is the only remedy. We must refuse our consent to collaborate with evil. Resistance to evil is not only a right but a duty. Such an apparently negative refusal is the most positive act of self-affirmation, which is much more difficult than facing death by assenting to evil and mixing with the crowds. In such decisive moments of our life it is only the fire of the spirit in us that can give us the vision, the courage and the strength to defy the world in the name of a better world. As literary men we claim, to use a hackneyed expression of politics, the privilege of self-determination. We acknowledge allegiance to no man, to no State. Others may compromise, but an artist should be absolutely honest. No false word should escape his lips, no false thought should enter his mind.\* Though we may be halting in our achievement, we may be perfect in our allegiance to the ideal of the integrity of self. Democracy, not as a political arrangement but as a religious faith, demands that the inner being in each one of us cannot be handed over to anyone's keeping without our ceasing to be true to our dignity as human beings. Yet there are authors who adopt a policy of social appeasement. Arnold Bennett argues that the writer has a right to conform to social standards, to public taste. "The truth is that an artist who demands appreciation from the public on his own terms, and none but his own terms, is either a god or a conceited and unpractical fool. And he is somewhat more likely to be the latter than the former. He wants too much." The important question is whether the writer is making concessions on non-essentials or essentials. If the writer surrenders his convictions, he has not the quality that makes him a great writer. To tell people things they like to hear is easy, to tell them things which they should hear is difficult but necessary. I may quote here the

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\* Cf. Goethe, who, when criticised for not having written war-songs during Napoleon's invasion of Germany, said: "In all my poetry I have never shammed what I have not lived through, what has not touched me to the quick I have never uttered in verse or prose. I made love-songs only when I was in love. How could I have written songs of hate without hatred? And between ourselves, I did not hate the French, though I thanked God when I got rid of them."

famous words of Garrison when he started the movement which led to the abolition of slavery in America "I am in earnest—I will not equivocate—I will not excuse—I will not retreat a single inch—and *I will be heard.*" What can be forgiven in a business man or even a political leader cannot be forgiven in an artist or a priest. Literary creation is not the outcome of calculated consideration but is the distillation of personal experience. If it has not vibrating sincerity, it fails as literature. The duty of intellectuals is to make society like and dislike what it ought to and thus raise it to a higher plane. We must incarnate the conscience of the future "The poet," Johnson said, "must divest himself of the prejudice of his age and country; he must consider right and wrong in their abstracted and invariable state, he must disregard present laws and opinions, and rise to general and transcendental truths, which will always be the same. He must, therefore, content himself with the slow progress of his name, condemn the praise of his own time and commit his claims to the justice of posterity." The only cause worth fighting for is that of the future of man. If we take up our task seriously, we will contribute to the creation of a new humanity. "Not round the inventor of new noises, but round the inventor of new values doth the world revolve: mandibly it revolveth." (Nietzsche)

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## ADDRESS ON FELLOWSHIP OF LEARNING AND INTERNATIONAL INTELLECTUAL CO-OPERATION \*

SIR RUSTOM MASANI.

The savage struggle of the past six years has dimmed, although it could not altogether impair, the vision beautiful of human unity and world community. With it is imperilled the ideal of the unity of knowledge and the fellowship of learning.

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\* Sir Rustom Masani's address was scheduled to be given during the morning session of the second day, but he was obliged at the last moment to cancel the engagement. The paper, however, was taken as read and is here printed in full,





service of civilisation While, however, so many proposals and plans are being put forward for what is called the post-war reconstruction of the world, we have as yet heard little of proposals for restoring the old intellectual ties and drawing together leaders of thought from different countries with a view to reasserting the fundamental relationship between man and man and creating by their concerted effort a healthy atmosphere for world peace and co-operation. Statesmen and scholars have lavishly poured forth honeyed words pre-saging a new era of international good-will But the world is eager to see internationalism in action and for that it looks to the thinkers and teachers of the world on whom more than on any other class of society the duty of restoring and fostering the spirit of internationalism lies

Twenty-five years ago, the League of Nations embarked on what was then regarded as an epoch-making effort to strengthen the intellectual relations of the nations of the world. Through its International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation and the elaborate organisation set up by it the League brought together men of eminence in various fields of intellectual life, provided facilities to them to understand one another and helped them with expert advice to study and to throw fresh light on matters of common interest such as the formation of an international Universities Association, co-ordination of institutions for scientific study of international relations, development of popular arts, schemes for historical and scientific publications, institution of international scholarships and interchange of professors and students.

The upheaval of 1914-18 had brought much privation to the intellectuals in many parts of Europe. A large number of them had lost their appointments which ensured them a reasonable degree of competence and comfort. To ameliorate their condition was at the outset the principal concern of the League's Committee Attention was therefore concentrated for some time on the material basis of intellectual life Investigations were set on foot concerning matters such as the pay and status of teachers and other intellectual workers, the copyright of authors, co-ordination of libraries, loan of manuscripts and museum exhibits, facilities for reference and

translations of important works, equivalence of university degrees and relationship between applied science and business. These efforts were, so to say, of the type of collective activity associated with what is known as the Co-operative Movement. What, however, we prize most and which the League also soon came to recognise, is the co-operation of intellectuals in regard to things of the spirit and spiritual values—civilisation, order, peace, rapprochement between peoples holding different views and convictions, a better association of individuals and nations and a better organisation of society so as to ensure unity, order and harmony. The object underlying all such activities was to build up a spirit of friendliness among leaders of thought who could influence the peoples of the world to embrace the ideal of the unity of the human race and international harmony.

Was this ideal then attainable? Is it now attainable? Was the co-operation contemplated by the League's organisation feasible either in the sphere of practical affairs or in the realm of intellect? Is it even now possible? Did not the optimists of the day fail to attain their ideals? Success and failure are but relative terms and this is neither the place nor the occasion to review the work of those who participated in the great co-operative enterprise in the field of intellectual work. I may, however, call attention to the fact that when the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation commenced its work in the year 1922, it found that the very nations that had got together to promote world co-operation in every sphere of life were yielding, once the threat to their security was removed, to the same old primitive instincts in which are rooted the causes of war. Nay, they were swayed by feelings of nationalism narrower even than that of pre-war days. What chances of success when even the best minds among the nations were a long way away from the change of outlook and spirit necessary for ushering in an era of better and saner international relationship? Today, when we are once more talking of world-fellowship and intellectual co-operation, we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that the atmosphere is no less vitiated than before. The passions let loose by the war have not yet spent their force and the attainment of the ideal is no easy matter. It cannot, how-

ever, on that account be ruled out as impracticable. Strive to attain it we must, facing the obstacles in our way with better knowledge and experience than were available to the League and its committees. Whether Horace had a premonition of the horrors of atomic bombs we do not know, but he has left behind a saying that has a prophetic ring to-day when the world has just recovered or rather not yet recovered, from the nightmare of the abominable missiles that rained down on earth during the last six years. It is, as he put it, a scholar's duty to go on thinking "even when thunderbolts rain down from the sky."

If the previous attempt failed, it was because the statesmen and other men of action of the day continued to move in the pre-war groove and because men of eminence in the world of thought failed to assert themselves and to demand that the old outlook and habits should be abandoned in the light of altered conditions. They failed on the last occasion, if they fail again, the world will have nothing to look forward to, save destruction. At no time in the history of human evolution were the thinkers and teachers of the world under so great an obligation as they are to-day to combine and make a world-wide effort to give a new orientation to the life of the people of the world and their national systems of education. How to make them feel the touch of the rekindled spirit of internationalism, how to make them regard human solidarity as the established principle of the life of each country and to teach old and young alike in every highway and byway throughout the world to accept international co-operation in every sphere of human activity as the normal method of conducting the affairs of the world is the all-important problem demanding immediate attention and constructive co-ordinated effort of the pillars of intellectual life in all countries. But their obligation does not cease there, as appears to have been assumed in the days of the League of Nations. Nor does it end with their co-operation with statesmen in the sphere of practical affairs. It is also their mission to oppose and denounce, and to ask their followers to denounce and dethrone, men in authority who do anything antagonistic to the spirit of internationalism or derogatory to human dignity, human decency and human justice.

Another important question demands consideration Is co-operation at all possible with those whose duty it was to promote mutual understanding and good-will but who, instead, spread or helped their Governments to spread, the gospel of hate and connived at, if not actually participated in, offences against scholarship ? In times of war scholars as men cannot help taking such part in the defence of their homeland as circumstances may render necessary, but where their countrymen are aggressors, glorying in warfare and brutality, they are expected as scholars to refrain from doing anything which is repugnant to the principles of humanity and international justice and which poisons the very sources of intellectual fellowship and intercourse

We in the East are faced to-day for the first time in our history with the problem of resumption of intellectual relations with those who allowed themselves to be exploited by dictators or who themselves applied their knowledge to ignoble ends and directed their propaganda towards providing totalitarianism with a philosophical scaffold, who indoctrinated their countrymen with pseudo-scientific theories of racial superiority and who glorified warfare as the fulfilment of human existence In Europe, however, the problem is not new. It already exercised the thought of scholars and learned societies after the collapse of Germany in 1918 There was a strong feeling in Britain and other countries that the learned societies of the world should mark their sense of indignation at the crimes against scholarship which German savants, held in high esteem in the academic world, had allowed to be perpetrated without any dissent either during or after the struggle. But allowances had to be made, and were made in a manner befitting scholars, on account of various factors—allowances on account of the rule of brute force and suppression of freedom of thought and speech, allowances on account of the dependence of scholars, "orders from above" and the difficulties in resisting the pressure of authority The demand for cancellation of honorary degrees conferred upon the offending scholars and for their expulsion from learned societies was turned down and international intellectual intercourse was resumed in due course

Once more, however, the intellectuals in Germany have

disregarded the obligations of scholarship. No doubt there must be honourable exceptions, but as a class they allowed themselves to be led into the Nazi orbit and put forward what was grotesque and unscholarly as the core of the German way of life and served as tools in the hands of their Nazi masters to meet the aims and needs of their master plan. Even more shocking than this was the readiness with which they associated themselves with their military leaders in their acts of brutality. It has rendered the question of reconciliation and restoration of intellectual life more difficult than ever before. The same observations apply to leaders of thought in Italy and Japan. Nevertheless, there is a general desire all over the world for the revival of normal intellectual relations after some steps are taken by the scholars of the offending countries to remove the resentment caused by their conduct. We may, therefore, hope to see the problem soon handled by the intellectuals of the world in a manner worthy of the scholar's outlook, the scholar's sense of tolerance, justice and fair-play, the scholar's vision of the unity of knowledge and the unity of all things that exist, and the scholar's faith in the destiny of man to forge his way forward to the goal of human unity and world community. A note of warning may, however, be sounded. Resumption of the intellectual life of the whole world must be the aim common to all. Cultural groups based on racial and psychological affinity are as dangerous for world peace as political or economic alliances based on such affinity. Tendencies to form cultural groups and cultural alliances of an exclusive nature must, therefore, be deprecated.

The Indian P. E. N. is a relatively young body. It is beyond its strength and its material resources to take a lead in the restoration of the intellectual life of the whole world. It, however, felt that a beginning should be made even on a small scale to renew the bonds of fellowship and it is a matter of legitimate pride for us that this first international conference of intellectuals after the war should have been convened and held under its auspices. It may be hoped that its proceedings will attract the attention of intellectuals throughout the world. Situated as we are to-day, we could not extend our invitations to those who belong to what we had

reluctantly to regard as enemy countries but whom we soon hope to greet as friends and fellow-workers in the same field

If the thinkers of the world combine to restore the intellectual life of the world and revive the activities which the League of Nations' International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation pursued in the field of pure thought and research but with an eye to the urgent problems of the day, and build up an organisation to serve as a centre of fellowship of learning and human brotherhood, they will make no mean contribution towards the promotion of international understanding and concord. But, surely, in the light of past experience a good deal more can be attempted and achieved than was possible for the League to accomplish, particularly in regard to one branch of study which in this critical hour of the world's history calls for a high endeavour on the part of scholars of the world. I mean the scientific study of man, his common cultural heritage and the cultural development of the various groups of human society. What the world needs to-day more than anything else for the promotion of mutual understanding is a clear demonstration of the oneness and the co-operative process underlying the development of human culture. Despite racial differences the core of every culture is the same. Man's emotions and feelings, his intellectual ideals, his love of beauty and fine arts, his attachment to his country, his striving for perfection in this slowly perfecting world, are everywhere the same. The divergencies witnessed in hygienic, educational and ethical standards among different peoples arise from passing social conditions and arrested development. But the pseudo-scientists continue to put forward their false theories of the so-called superior and inferior races, foment racial antipathies and foster beliefs concerning what is held to be innate inequality of different races, their irreducible differences, physiological divisions and psychological limitations. To correct such errors is the mission not only of scientists and sociologists but also of scholars and authors generally. To them the whole world looks to-day for the vindication as well as propagation of the doctrine of humanity, equality and fraternity, the noblest aspiration of man and the loftiest expression of civilisation

## INTRODUCTION TO THE EXHIBITION OF FRENCH BOOKS

M FRANCIS BRUNEL :

Mr President, Ladies and Gentlemen :—

It is wonderfully opportune that we are assembled here today. I am greatly honoured to be able to speak to you, and my thanks are due to Madame Wadia for that. I am privileged to present to you today, and perhaps tomorrow as well, some of the latest French publications which have been sent to me by the French Government to be displayed at this Jaipur Conference. Moreover, India on this occasion is the first country outside France which has the privilege of seeing them, and after this most of these books will go to some other embassies. I have to give you just a few details about these publications. They have all been printed, composed or written, and the drawings too have been done, during the resistance and fighting or immediately after the liberation. It is only one year since France was liberated, and you will see that the suffering she has undergone has brought a kind of harvest of poets, of musicians, of writers, and we think that it is the beginning of a real renaissance in France, in spite of all the difficulties we have to overcome. I think that through this suffering France has found greater depths and has reached nearer Truth, and the French style is in a way more direct, much more direct and virile, than it was before. The thought too has a greater power and reaches you directly, and at the same time it seems that there is a suggestion of poetry even in the prose. May I read to you a few poems suggestive of the new spirit in French poetry ? Two are by Louis Aragon, to whom I forwarded the very kind invitation of the P. E. N. All-India Centre to attend this Conference. But he could not come, although he would have wished it very much indeed. The third poem I am going to read to you is an anonymous poem written during the occupation. The second is the song of one who "sang in torture" and its defiant challenge is "If I had to tread that path again, I should tread it." And that is the song of one who was shot by the Germans. I shall now read the three songs,



## MA FRANCE

*Je vous salue, ma France, arrachée aux fantômes !  
O rendue à la pair ! Vaisseau sauvé des eaux...  
Pays qui chante Orléans, Beaugency, Vendôme !  
Cloches, cloches, sonnez l'angélus des oiseaux !*

*Je vous salue, ma France, aux yeux de tourterelle,  
Jamais trop mon tourment, mon amour jamais trop !  
Ma France, mon ancienne et nouvelle querelle,  
Sol semé de héros, ciel plein de passereaux. .*

*Je vous salue, ma France, où les vents se calmèrent !  
Ma France de toujours, que la géographie  
Ouvre comme une paume aux souffles de la mer  
Pour que l'oiseau du large y vienne et se confie !*

*Je vous salue, ma France, où l'oiseau de passage,  
De Lille à Roncevaux, de Brest au Montcenis,  
Pour la première fois a fait l'apprentissage  
De ce qu'il peut coûter d'abandonner un nid !*

*Patrie également à la colombe ou l'aigle,  
De l'audace et du chant doublement habitée !  
Je vous salue, ma France, où les blés et les seigles  
Mûrissent au soleil de la diversité . .*

*Je vous salue, ma France, où le peuple est habile  
A ces travaux qui font les jours émerveillés  
Et que l'on vient de loin saluer dans sa ville  
Paris, mon cœur, trois ans vainement fusillé !*

*Huicuse et forte enfin qui portez pour écharpe  
Cet arc-en-ciel témoin qu'il ne tonnera plus,  
Liberté dont frémit le silence des harpes,  
Ma France d'au delà le déluge, salut !*

LOUIS ARAGON

BALLADE DE CELUI QUI CHANTA  
DANS LES SUPPLICES

*" Et s'il était à refaire,  
Je referais ce chemin..."  
Une voix monte des fers  
Et parle des lendemains.*

On dit que dans sa cellule,  
Deux hommes, cette nuit-là,  
Lui murmuraient : "Capitule.  
De cette vie es-tu las ?

Tu peux vivre, tu peux vivre,  
Tu peux vivre comme nous !  
Dis le mot qui te délivre  
Et tu peux vivre à genoux. ."

"Et s'il était à refaire,  
Je referais ce chemin..."  
La voix qui monte des fers  
Parle pour les lendemains.

Rien qu'un mot : la porte cède,  
S'ouvre et tu sors ! Rien qu'un mot :  
Le bourreau se dépossède...  
Sésame ! Finis tes maux !

Rien qu'un mot, rien qu'un mensonge  
Pour transformer ton destin...  
Songe, songe, songe, songe  
A la douceur des matins !

"Et si c'était à refaire  
Je referais ce chemin..."  
La voix qui monte des fers  
Parle aux hommes de demain.

"J'ai dit tout ce qu'on peut dire :  
L'exemple du Roi Henri...  
Un cheval pour mon empire...  
Une messe pour Paris..."

Rien à faire." Alors qu'ils partent !  
Sur lui retombe son sang !  
C'était son unique carte :  
Périsset cet innocent !

Et si c'était à refaire  
Referait-il ce chemin ?  
La voix qui monte des fers  
Dit : "Je le ferai demain.

*Je meurs et France demeure  
 Mon amour et mon refus  
 O mes amis, si je meurs,  
 Vous saurez pourquoi ce fut ! "*  
*Ils sont venus pour le prendre.  
 Ils parlent en allemand.  
 L'un traduit " Veux-tu te rendre ? "*  
*Il répète calmement :*  
*" Et si c'était à refaire  
 Je referais ce chemin,  
 Sous vos coups, chargé de fers,  
 Que chantent les lendemains ! "*  
*Il chantait, lui, sous les balles,  
 Des mots : " .. sanglant est levé .. "*  
*D'une seconde rafale  
 Il a fallu l'achever  
 Une autre chanson française  
 A ses lèvres est montée,  
 Finissant la Marseillaise  
 Pour toute l'humanité '*

LOUIS ARAGON

### TOUS MES AMIS SONT MORTS

*Tous mes amis sont morts  
 ou bien sont en prison  
 et moi si loin du port,  
 l'orage à l'horizon  
 L'orage sur la terre  
 et la mer embrasée,  
 L'ouragan se resserre  
 Et moi je suis brisée  
 Et il me faut aller,  
 en cachant ma grand'peine,  
 avoir courage et haine  
 jetés dans la mêlée.  
 Mais je voudrais bercer  
 comme les autres femmes  
 dans un berceau tressé  
 un enfant tout en larmes.*

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## ADDRESS ON "THE PHILOSOPHICAL BASIS OF TOLERATION"

MR. KSHITIMOHAN SEN —

Friends —

If we are to believe in the Theory of Evolution, animals came first, men much later. In the animal world, might is the fundamental principle. The stronger one assumes preponderance and dominates over the rest who are cowed down by fear and obediently follow his lead. This scramble for leadership has led to perpetual fighting and bloodshed among the animals. As soon as the leader becomes weaker, new aspirants come forward and challenge his authority. If he dares not accept the challenge, his leadership automatically goes, and if he does take up the fight but loses the battle, then too his leadership goes.

After a slow process of evolution for ages, man at length appeared on the face of the earth. Since then, again, ages have elapsed. Yet man has not completely rid himself of his original animal instinct. The great wars coming in quick succession only prove that man is not yet free from his brute nature. Still it cannot be denied that higher ideals have been at work, which have enlightened the path of human progress.

I once witnessed the glorious sunrise on the Himalayas. The first beams of the rising sun had already touched the highest peaks, but the valleys below were still steeped in profound darkness. The dawn does not arrive at all places at the same time. Only the greater heights can welcome the earliest light of the day.

Not only in the field of politics but in religion and culture too the light of wisdom did not dawn upon all men at the same time. When the Egyptian King Atena Hotep preached his great religion how few could understand the catholic spirit behind it! When asked for enlightenment the Buddha replied, "Kindle the lamp of thine own spirit" (आत्मदीपो भव) In spite of that, authority on the one hand and servility on the other continued to be the order of the day throughout the world. Even in comparatively recent

times enlightened Europe witnessed the bloody atrocities of the Inquisition. The Europeans conquered America by brute force and sought to impose on her their own culture and religion by suppressing the *Maya* and *Aztec* civilizations. Those great American civilizations were practically strangled to death by the Europeans. Those people preferred to efface themselves from the face of the earth rather than sacrifice their long-earned culture. Where are those Indians to-day? Even the remnants of that ancient civilization reveal a remarkably high standard of morality and purity. The so-called civilized people of to-day are not even fit to touch their feet. I was reading the other day a book entitled, *Little Golden America* by two Russian writers Elya Ilf and Eugene Petrov. They have nothing but admiration for the Navajo Indians of whom they bear testimony to this assertion of a missionary who had lived with them :

"They are faultlessly honest. There are never any crimes among them. It seems to me that they don't know even what crime is. During the last twenty years I have learnt to respect them as I have never respected any white man, and I am very sorry for them."

(p 171)

"And to tell you the truth I don't know more honest, noble, and clean-cut people than the Indians. They taught me to love the Sun, the Moon, the Desert. They taught me to understand nature."

(p 175)

It is interesting to note that this was said by a missionary who came to preach religion amongst the Indians but later on gave up his career as a preacher and adopted the Indian way of life which he considered to be of a higher order than his own. It is really funny that the very same people who are anxious to give religious enlightenment to the Indians are themselves at a very low stage of moral development.

In this respect, however, the history of India has a speciality of its own. Throughout the ages numerous races, religions and cultures have found their way into India. India had developed a great civilization even before the advent of the Vedic Aryans and even before that there were other civilizations which date back to still earlier times. The special feature of these Indian cultures is that none sought to suppress or supersede the other. "Live and let live" was

their principle. The most enlightened religious views are found to exist side by side with primitive aboriginal customs. When Rabindranath was engaged in composing the immortal songs of *Gitanjali* at Santiniketan the Santhals were worshipping *Bonga* or the spirits in the neighbouring villages. The one did not interfere with the other.

The delta of a river is formed by gradual deposits of soil. In like manner Indian culture and religion owe their growth to the accumulated contributions made at different periods by various races. Even today those races are following their respective lines of culture side by side, without coming into conflict with one another. India is, therefore, an excellent field for those who want to study Comparative Religion. In this one country they will find all possible stages of religion residing side by side.

Although from the standpoint of culture India offers a unique opportunity to students of religion yet politically this diversity has landed India in enormous difficulties. A ship which has been taken out piece by piece may be good enough for students but will be no use to one who would like to cross the sea. What is wanted in the field of state-craft is coherence of interests, because brute force still reigns supreme there. Even the beasts know that unless they live in herds it would become difficult to catch their prey.

But should this mentality work in the field of culture too? It is significant to note how the exclusive ceremonialism of the earliest texts of the Vedas has gradually changed into a liberal philosophy and religion after having come in contact with the different cultures of the land. That liberal outlook is seen at its best in the Upanishads. Considered from all standpoints the Upanishads reveal a profundity which can easily put to shame all the exclusive ceremonialism of the Vedas

We find the same liberal outlook in the *Rigveda*. Says the Rishi—

एकं सद् विप्रा बहुधा वदन्ति ।

(I, 164, 46)

"Truth is one, only the wise have explained it in different ways."

The *Kena Upanisad* says, "Whoever thinks that he has been able to understand Him has in fact failed to comprehend anything, whereas he that feels his inability to comprehend Him has really known Him " (2, 3)

As a matter of fact the ultimate Truth is to be found in man alone. *Atharva* says, "He that has witnessed Brahma in man has really seen Him in His fundamental reality "

(10, 7, 17)

"He is present in all creatures, and He is the soul of all " (*Çweta Çwatara Upanisad*, 6, 11)

This is the basis of toleration. Once we realize this truth there can be no distinction between man and man and no hatred for one another

"Truth pervades the entire Universe, it is Truth that makes the wind blow and the sun shine; everything rests on Truth. Hence it is, that Truth is regarded as final and supreme " (*Taittiriya, Aianyaka*, 10, 63, 1)

And therefore the Buddha, too, said, "Be thou thine own light " In the great Vaishnavic scripture *Bhagabata*, Srikrishna says, "We are our own preceptors" (11, 7, 20). The needed light will come from within ourselves. The truth that pervades the universe resides in our soul too. Long before this the *Maha Bharata* said the same thing "Everything is based on that Truth " (*Çanti*, 162, 5). "He that takes his stand on Truth has realized all that matters in life" (*Udyog*, 43, 52) In a Brahmin the chief characteristic is his catholicity of mind, i.e., toleration. "A Brahmin cannot think of a greater virtue than a feeling of equality for all " (*Çanti Parva*, 175, 37). So a Brahmin is not worth his salt if he is guided by narrow, exclusive and conservative ideas

The Buddha has himself said the light of Truth is burning in every soul. True Sadhana consists in having that flame kindled

Although degeneration had subsequently crept into Buddhism still his followers had not lost sight of the original edict of Buddha. Hence they say, "In every body there lies concealed the great Truth which transcends the limitations of the body "

The later Jain theologians say the same thing, "Truth resides in the temple of the human body "

If God is there in every man, then everyone has got to be liberal as a matter of course. This is the real basis of the philosophy of toleration.

In India the Vedic, Pre-Vedic, Aryan and Pre-Aryan religions and cultures have all flourished side by side in an atmosphere of mutual friendship. In a garden there are flowers of various colours and fragrance but they all combine together to make the garden a perfect one. Hence the religion of India has not been associated with the name of any great man as founder.

Christianity is the religion propounded by Christ, Muhammadanism that by Muhammad, but the religion of India (Hind) is simply known by the name of Hindu, *i.e.*, Indian. It would be wrong to associate it with a particular man or sect. The offerings made by numerous people at the altar of India's spiritual aspirations have all helped the development of a religion known as Hindu or Indian.

In the course of time numerous cultures have come to be incorporated into the Indian religion. Hence the catholic attitude of India. All religions found a peaceful haven in India. There was no need to come as conquerors. The newcomers found ample opportunities to follow their own culture and religion without interference from others. Even as early as the 1st century A.D. the Syrian Christians came to Southern India where they were welcomed by the King from whom they received land as free gifts. The Parsees driven away from their own homes were warmly received in Gujerat and settled down there. Muslim devotees (साधक) came to India long before the Muslims came as conquerors. During the times of Tejpal and Bastupal, Anupama Devi of Gujerat established as many as eighty Mosques for the Muhammadans. These were not meant for the conquering Muslim hordes.

Trouble arose with the conquering Muslims. The Hindu and Muslim theologians carried on endless controversies which can never lead to real unity. The task of bringing about a fusion of the two religions was taken up by Kabir and other devotees. They were illiterate simple persons free from all traditional prejudices. Kabir set his hands to a task in which



the theologians had failed miserably. People said, "Kabir, you are an illiterate, ignorant person, how can you bring about the desired unity?" Kabir answered, "Heated by bookish knowledge theologians have become like hardened bricks. If two pieces of hard-burnt bricks strike against each other, they only produce fire. But we ignorant people are like clay. Two lumps of clay can easily be welded into one."

Providence has sent to India sect after sect and at the same time God has sent devotee after devotee to bring about a fusion of the different elements. None obliterated the other. Our heroes are not those who have made military conquests but those who have brought about a synthesis of different cultures. Hence Ram, Krishna, Buddha are our greatest heroes. Kabir also kept up the glorious tradition of his great predecessors. He said, "There is no separate name for my message. You may call it the message of India or the Indian way of life." The followers of Kabir still call themselves *Bharata-Pathikas*.

According to Kabir, a stringed instrument like the Vina has many strings producing different tones of different pitches, but each one of them is indispensable to an expert musician. He would not leave out a single string. Only an amateur in his anxiety to simplify, cheapens it by reducing the many-stringed Vina into a monotonous *Ek-tara*.

Of the numerous religious thoughts of India not a single one should be left out of consideration. They are the various strings of one instrument which would combine to produce the harmonious music of Indian *Sadhana*.

The very same thing was put in a more beautiful form by the great devotee Rājjabī. When asked about the difference between sects Rājjabī said, "There are as many sects as there are men. Every individual represents a special manifestation of God." Here he strikes that note of toleration which is India's special characteristic. According to him a Guru is like a shower of rain which will fertilize the mind of the disciples and help them develop their own peculiar specialities. The Guru must not forget that in the disciple, too, there is the manifestation of the Divine Being. He has no right to smother the potential individuality of the disciple under the burden of his own ideas and opinions. Thus when

we say that even the Guru has no right to impose himself on his disciple how can one sect think of suppressing another ? Every man is a temple of God. Who but a fool would dare destroy a temple where God is pleased to reveal himself ?

Rajjabji was a disciple of Dadu. They were born near Jaipur. More than three hundred years ago this city was sanctified by the dust of their feet. Who knows if they have not passed through this very conference ground joyfully preaching their messages ? It is in the fitness of things, therefore, that we have selected this subject for discussion in this place.

Kabir may be said to be the original Guru of both Dadu and Rajjab. When narrow-minded people were emphasizing the differences between the Hindus and Muslims Kabir said,

"Hindus utter the name of Ram while the Muslims utter the name of Khoda. But that man really lives who avoids both these extremes. I neither perform *Puja* nor do I perform the *namaz*. In my inmost heart I pay my obeisance to a universal God. Where there is real devotion there is no outward show. There can be no communal or sectarian feeling."

Here is toleration in its truest sense. The way Kabir characterises his religious life is really wonderful. He says, "If you call me a Hindu, I would say I am not a Hindu, nor am I a Muslim. This body of mine is composed of the five elements and there you can see the manifestations of an unseen God." (*Sad Guru Kabir Sahib Sakhi Grantha*, Baroda, *Madhya*, 23)

Kabir had a great dislike for people who had made religion a profession. He said, "I keep myself forty miles away from Kirtanias and sixty miles from Sanyasis. He used to say that unsophisticated sinners would never go to hell. Hell was reserved for the calculated observers of religious laws.

Rabidas, Guru Nanak and others were all apostles of toleration and catholicity. But I would like to confine myself on this occasion to Dadu and Rajjab who, as local inhabitants, are associated with Jaipur.

Dadu spent some portion of his life of devotion and realization at Amer and Sambhar not far from this place. He was born in 1544 and died in 1603



I am reminded here of the Jain saint Ananda Ghana who said the same thing —

राम कहौ रहिमान कहौ कान कहौ महादेव री ॥ (No. 67)

"Everybody said, 'You have got to attach yourself to some sect, otherwise how can you carry on your *Sadhana*? If you want to serve the world it must be through some sect or other' Dadu replied, 'Look at the earth and the sky, the sun and the moon, at wind and water Do they belong to any sect?' " (Sach, 113)

"What sect did Muhammad belong to, and to which one did Gabriel? Who was their preceptor or guiding Saint?" (Sach, 115)

"Everybody seems to be happy with the members of his own sect I do not suffer from that weakness. I am a servant of God I do not feel satisfied within the narrow fold of any particular sect "

We have seen, therefore, that the spirit of toleration runs through all the teachings of Dadu. He built up his life of devotion and service on the solid foundation of toleration

His disciple Rajjab did the same. He says, "The Hindu is happy only with his own way of life, and the Muslim with his. But does God who is Love make any such distinction?"

"Look here, Rajjab, Nature is the real Vedas, and this entire creation, the Koran In vain do the theologians look for Truth in the dry books which they call the Shastras The Shastras serve only to mislead us The living Shastra is in life and the world around Why should we leave that ever-fresh source of living wisdom and turn our attention to the stale and lifeless pages of books? The soul of a Saint is another kind of Vedas where he records with flesh and blood new truths revealed to his mind. Nobody cares to read these Shastras It is in the world of humanity that you can find written in luminous letters the endless wisdom of the Vedas. You can fathom its mysteries only when you put out the disturbing light of your artificial knowledge O thou Hindu and Muslim, read that living Shastra Leave aside the dead weight of bookish learning O Rajjab, read thou the living Shastra which is in the heart of every man "

I have specially confined myself to Dadu and Rajjab because Jaipur is sanctified by the memories of these two great men. Otherwise the same spirit of toleration runs through the teachings of all Indian *Sadhaks* or saints In this connection I am naturally reminded of the Bauls of Bengal. They occupy a vast place in our literature. I am afraid I have already overstepped the limit prescribed to me.

I will now conclude quoting only one song by a Baul named Madan who was born two hundred years ago in Eastern Bengal. He was illiterate and happened to be born in a Muslim family. He gives vent to his lament in the following lines:—

Thy path, O Lord, is hidden by mosque and temple  
 Thy call I hear, but *guru* and *murshid* stop the way.  
 What gives peace to my heart, sets but the world ablaze,  
 The cult of the One dies in the conflict of the many,—  
 Its door closed by the locks of Koran, Puran and rosary  
 Even the way of renunciation is full of tribulation, wherefore  
 weeps Madan in despair

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## DISCUSSION ON THE DESIRABILITY OF REVISION OF THE INDIAN COPYRIGHT LAW AND MAKING IT UNIFORM THROUGHOUT INDIA

### ADDRESS ON "THE INDIAN LAW OF COPYRIGHT"

SIR MAURICE GWYER: \*

It is a great honour to be invited to deliver an address on the Indian Law of Copyright before such a distinguished gathering but it is one which carries a considerable responsibility with it, because I think it probable that most of those present have much greater practical knowledge of the subject than I can claim myself, and will not be so much interested in a mere theoretical exposition of the law. Nevertheless, it is always useful for the members of every profession or calling to know not only the law applicable to it but also what is perhaps more important, the principles on which that law is based. Fortunately, Copyright Law is a good deal more plain and straightforward than many branches of law: and such difficulties as it presents in practice arise, as usual, more from the application of the law to particular facts than from any obscurity in the law itself.

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\* Sir Maurice Gwyer was to have initiated the discussion on Copyright with this paper which in his unavoidable absence had been dropped. It is however printed here appropriately at the beginning of the discussion.

Copyright existed in England as Common Law, but its scope was vague and uncertain and the remedies available for infringement were unsatisfactory. Statutory copyright was given for the first time by the Copyright Act, 1709 (8 Anne c 21), the copyright period under this Act was 14 years, which could be extended for a further 14. The curious will find the earlier law discussed in the great case of *Miller v Taylor* (1769) which was decided in the King's Bench when Lord Mansfield was Lord Chief Justice of England. The case is reported in 4 Burrow's Reports, 2303, and one of the Judges began his judgment with a long and elaborate eulogy of literature, which seems to have greatly impressed the reporter, for the report then continues: "After this very decent preface, he (the Judge) spoke for near two hours," discussing the legal issues involved in the case, but beyond stating the decision at which the Judge arrived, the reporter gives no further details of the judgment itself. The Act of Anne was followed by the Copyright Act, 1842, and it was during the debates on this bill that Macaulay made one of his most famous speeches. This Act gave copyright in books for a period of 42 years from the date of publication or for the life of the author and seven years afterwards, whichever was the longer period; or, in the case of books first published after the author's death, for 42 years from the date of publication. Later Acts gave protection to engravings, sculpture, musical works, dramatic performances, and artistic works and photographs. The provisions of all these Acts (with one insignificant exception) are now repealed by the Copyright Act, 1911, which came into force in the following year, and which now contains the whole law relating to copyright, including copyright in unpublished works.

The Indian Law of Copyright is now for all practical purposes to be found in the British Copyright Act of 1911, which extended to all British possessions, though in countries outside the United Kingdom it did not come into force until it was either enacted by the local Legislature or was declared to have come into force by the Local Government. The whole Act came into force in India in October, 1912, with the exception of three sections which the Act itself declares to be applicable to the United Kingdom only. A later Indian

Copyright Act (No. III of 1914) provides certain summary remedies for infringement, but save on one point to which I shall draw attention hereafter, does not alter the English Act

The Act of 1911 has imprinted itself on my memory, because it was the first Statute with the making of which I had any personal connection, though in a very humble capacity indeed. I was at that time "devilling" for Sir John Simon, then Solicitor-General and later Lord Chancellor, who was one of the Ministers in charge of the Committee stage of the bill; and I remember very well sitting day after day in the Committee room, listening to rather tedious debates and the consideration of the various amendments which members of the Committee sought to bring forward, many of them showing very little understanding of the principles of the bill or of the just claim of authors to be permitted to enjoy the fruits of their own brains and labour. Particularly was this the case with the Labour members of the Committee, less experienced in public affairs than they are now, who could only see in any copyright at all a sinister attempt to deprive the working man of cheap literature, not realising that the labourer is always worthy of his hire, and that the creations of the brain are, without the protection of copyright, exposed to the certainty of exploitation to an extent much greater than the manual worker has ever dreamed of. The critics of the bill might indeed have justified their attitude by a reference to the speech of Macaulay to which I have already referred, for he said of copyright "It is a tax on readers for the purpose of giving a bounty to writers. The tax is an exceedingly bad one, it is a tax on one of the most innocent and salutary of human pleasures." Nevertheless, he concluded that "it is desirable that we should have a supply of good books, we cannot have such a supply unless men of letters are liberally remunerated, and the least objectionable way of remunerating them is by means of copyright."

It will be convenient to consider first what may be the subject matter of copyright, next the legal rights which copyright confers, for what period those rights exist, and what constitutes an infringement of them, then the title to copyright and how it may be assigned or transmitted to

others, what remedies are available to those whose rights are infringed, and lastly, something requires to be said on international copyright. Some general reflections may fittingly conclude the paper.

Under the Act of 1911, copyright is given in respect of every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, if in the case of a published work it was first published within those parts of His Majesty's dominions to which the Act extends, and in the case of an unpublished work, if the author at the date of the making of the work was a British subject and resident within such parts of His Majesty's dominions. Since this paper is addressed to a gathering of authors, I do not propose to discuss copyright in dramatic, musical or artistic works, which would expand this paper to undue lengths, and I shall confine what I have to say to copyright in literary works only. I may, however, mention in passing that the Act of 1911 for the first time created a new right, *viz.*, that of making records or other contrivances, including cinematograph films, by which musical and other works may be mechanically produced, and with the development of the gramophone and the cinema this right today has of course become an exceedingly valuable one.

The protection given is, as I have said, to an "original literary work." The "originality" of which the Act speaks refers to an originality of expression and not to any originality in the ideas expressed; and it is important to distinguish the legal right which is known as copyright from certain other legal rights which bear some analogy to it. The right conferred on the holder of a patent is, like copyright, a monopoly right, but it is a monopoly right in an *idea*, that is to say, it gives the patentee an exclusive right to make use of the idea or invention of which he was the first discoverer. Then copyright must also be distinguished from those rights which arise from the existence of a confidential relationship, as for instance between a master and servant or a principal and agent. A servant or agent who for his own benefit makes use of written material which he has acquired while the confidential relationship still existed can be restrained from doing so, because he has committed a breach of confidence, and not because he is guilty of any infringement of copyright. There



is no copyright in news as such, though there may be in the particular form in which the news is given, but the employee of a news agency can be restrained from disclosing confidential information which has come to his knowledge in the course of his employment. Lastly, no man is permitted by the law to pass off his own goods to the public in such a way as to suggest that they are the goods of someone else, and, by trading on another's reputation, make for himself a dishonest profit. There is, generally speaking, no copyright in the mere title of a book or a newspaper, but anyone who sold a newspaper bearing the title of "The Times" and got up to represent "The Times," or who published a book bearing the same title as a current best-seller but not otherwise resembling it, can be restrained by injunction, not because he has committed an infringement of copyright, but because he has attempted to defraud the public by passing off his own goods as those of another.

Copyright, then, protects the *form* in which ideas are expressed. It does not protect the idea itself. And when the Act speaks of "original literary work" it uses the word "literary work" not in what might perhaps be regarded as its ordinary signification, but to distinguish such works from dramatic, musical or artistic works. There is indeed nothing literary, in the sense in which members of this gathering would be accustomed to use the word, about some of the original literary works to which the law has afforded protection under the present Act or those which have preceded it. Even an examination paper may be subject to copyright. The Copyright Act, 1842, protected "books," and defined that word as meaning "every volume, part or division of a volume, pamphlet, sheet of letterpress, sheet of music, map, chart or plan separately published." There is no definition of "literary work" in the Act of 1911, which merely states that it "includes" maps, charts, plans, tables and compilations. It will be seen therefore that "literary work" in the Act of 1911 is a good deal wider than the word "book" in the earlier Statute, but the decisions of Courts under the earlier Act will still be relevant for the purpose of interpreting the wider phrase. Compilations were held to be protected under the old law, and are now ex-

pressly included under the expression " literary work " in the Act of 1911. They must, however, be original compilations, that is to say, labour and skill must have been spent upon them in such a manner as to give the resulting product a quality or character which the matter from which the compilation was made did not possess. A list of fox-hounds and an index of railway stations have been protected under the old law and a collection of broadcasting programmes under the new. Advertising matter, if " original, " may also claim protection ; and private letters are literary works. In a Calcutta case it was held that the copyright in the " Golden Treasury " was infringed by the publication of an almost identical book of poems, with the order slightly altered and with notes for examination purposes added. Here it was the compilation which was protected, the copyright in the poems themselves having long expired. It was the selection and arrangement of the non-copyright material in the " Golden Treasury " which made it an original compilation and therefore entitled to protection under the Act, but the Judicial Committee have held that a new edition of a work of which the copyright has already expired does not itself become entitled to protection of the law merely because there have been a few amendments of the text or a few notes added to the original. The alterations must be extensive and substantial to create a copyright, and the notes must be a real addition to the work, one of the tests suggested being whether the new edition would be purchased because of the value of the notes.

Immoral or libellous works cannot of course claim protection, but what is immoral to one age may become the commonplace of another. Lord Eldon refused an injunction in the case of Lord Byron's " Cam " and another judge some years later took the same view of some of the cantos of " Don Juan. " " The Memoirs of Harriette Wilson, " a notorious lady of the town, which shocked Chief Justice Abbott in 1826 have been republished in recent years without exciting comment. Some of those present may recollect a best-seller of some thirty years ago, called " Three Weeks " which had a *succès de scandale* as what was thought then to be a daring piece of work. The authoress claimed that her copyright had been infringed by a film called " Three Weeks Hard " An in-

dignant judge, having read the book and seen the film, held that the first was of a highly immoral tendency and not entitled to protection, and that the latter was of so vulgar a character as to disentitle the defendant to his costs. I remember reading the book myself. The authoress relied upon rows of asterisks at critical points to stimulate the imagination, a more modern and tougher age dispenses with the asterisks altogether, and the book today would pass without notice.

Copyright means the sole right to produce or reproduce the work or any substantial part of it in any material form whatsoever, or to deliver it in the form of a lecture. It includes also the right to produce, reproduce, or publish any translation of the work, to convert it into a dramatic work by way of performance or otherwise and *vice versa*, and to make any record or contrivance by which the work may be mechanically performed or delivered. In the case of an unpublished work it means the right to publish.

The Indian Courts before the Act had held that copyright in English books did not confer the right to have the book translated into an Indian vernacular, and that such a translation was therefore no infringement of copyright. This seems a strange decision, but the Act of 1911 now settles the question in the opposite sense.

The rights thus given continue during the author's life and for a period of 50 years after his death. Where there is a joint authorship, the period is for the life of the author who dies first and for fifty years after his death, or during the life of the author who dies last, whichever period is the longer. But in order to prevent a selfish refusal by the owner of the copyright to give the public the benefit of publication, certain important provisions should be noticed. Anyone may lawfully reproduce for sale any copyright work on the expiration of 25 years from the death of the author if he has given notice in writing of his intention to do so and has paid the owner of the copyright royalties at the rate of 10% on the published price in respect of all copies sold by him. Further than this, a complaint may be made to the Judicial Committee at any time after the author's death that the owner of the copyright has refused to publish or to allow

republishation, so that the work is withheld from the public ; and the Judicial Committee may then order the owner to grant a licence to reproduce the work on such terms and conditions as they may think fit.

With regard to translations, the Indian Copyright Act of 1914 has introduced certain modifications in the case of works published in British India. The right to produce, reproduce, perform, or publish translations of such works continues for a period of 10 years only, not for 50 ; but if during those 10 years the author or his licensee publishes a translation of the work in any language, then copyright in the translation will subsist for the normal period of the author's life and 50 years after his death. No doubt the intention is to encourage Indian authors to get their works translated into the various Indian vernaculars.

I come now to the question of infringement. The general principle is that a person commits an infringement who, without the consent of the owner of the copyright, does anything which the owner of the copyright alone has the right to do. It will be remembered that copyright includes the sole right to produce or reproduce the work or any substantial part of it. To reproduce a "substantial" part, though not the whole, of a copyright therefore amounts to an infringement. Whether this has in fact been done is a question of fact, to be decided in a commonsense way. It is not always the quantity of the matter reproduced which constitutes an infringement ; the materiality of the matter taken may also be of importance. An abridgment may be an infringement, and generally speaking, the question to be answered would seem to be : Has the alleged infringement made an unfair use of the copyright material so as to rob the owner of part of the fruits of his labour ?

It is, however, expressly provided that certain acts are not to constitute an infringement. These are as follows (1) Any fair dealing with the work for the purposes of private study, research, criticism, review or newspaper summary. The important word here is "fair"—the use made of the copyright material must be such as to come within the expression "fair dealing." The use made must be a reasonable one, having regard both to the interests of the copyright

owner and to the specific purposes for which the copyright material is permitted by the Act to be used. No general rule can be laid down, but it should not be difficult in any given case to decide whether the use made is fair or unfair. (2) The publication in a collection, mainly composed of non-copyright matter, *bona fide* intended for the use of schools and so described in the title and advertisements, of short copyright passages from published works not intended for the use of schools; but not more than two such passages from works by the same author may be published or the same published within five years, and the source of the passage must be acknowledged. (3) The publication in a newspaper of the report of a lecture delivered in public, unless the report is prohibited by notices conspicuously displayed at or near the entrance to the lecture-hall. (4) The reading or recitation in public by one person of any reasonable extract from a published work.

"Lectures" are defined as including an address, a speech and a sermon. In the case of a lecture, delivery in public does *not* constitute publication and therefore the author alone has the right of publication or to produce or reproduce the lecture or any substantial part of it in any form whatever, or to authorize its production or reproduction. University lecturers may not always be aware of the rights which the law gives them, and I have myself seen the notes of lectures reprinted for the use of students by unscrupulous persons without the consent of the lecturer. The "fair dealing" provision applies of course to lectures as to other copyright matter, and it is therefore no infringement for a student to take notes for his own private use.

There is one other odd provision in the Act about lectures. It is no infringement of copyright to publish a newspaper report of an address of a political nature delivered at a public meeting. This to be found in a section towards the end of the Act, where it was obviously inserted as an amendment while the bill was going through Parliament, and its purpose is obvious. A learned author, however, has suggested that its wording has a much wider scope than was probably intended, and he suggests indeed that it would cover a lecture on the political views of Plato, Aristotle or

Hobbes. I cannot but think that the Courts would strive to give the words a narrower meaning, and certainly the learned author's suggestion would impose unreasonable disabilities on my academic friends who lecture on Political Science as compared with those who content themselves with less dangerous subjects: though, to be sure, not many newspapers would want to publish reports of academic lectures even on the political views of the three authors I have named

The author of a literary work is, with certain exceptions which I will mention later, the first owner of the copyright, that is to say, the person who actually composes the work, as distinguished from a stenographer or amanuensis who does no more than write it down on the one hand, and from a person who may have first suggested the idea of the composition to the author. Joint authors are those who compose a work in collaboration so that it is not possible to distinguish that which is done by one of them from that which is done by the other. In the case of an encyclopædia or such a work as the English "Dictionary of National Biography," the copyright belongs to the authors of the individual articles, while the editor of the whole work has a copyright in the arrangement and general design of the whole. The copyright in private letters vests in the writers of the letters, who can therefore restrain any unauthorized publication, even by the persons to whom the letters are addressed, since the addressing of a private letter to a correspondent is not "publication" of the letter. In the case of an unpublished work copyright belongs *prima facie* to the proprietor of the manuscript.

There is, however, an exception to the general rule in the case of a person employed under a contract of service who composes a literary work in the course of his employment. In this case the employer becomes the owner of the copyright and not the employee. Two points must be noted here. the work must have been done in the course of the servant's employment, and the servant will therefore retain the copyright in any work done in his spare time, and the contract must be a contract of service, and not a contract for services; for example, if the proprietor of a newspaper invites someone to contribute an article for the paper, he

contracts for the services of the writer, who does not thereby become his servant or employee. The distinction is that between the servant and the independent contractor, which is well recognized by the law in other branches of human activity. Note, however, that where the work is an article or other contribution to a newspaper or periodical, there is deemed to be reserved to the author, in the absence of any agreement to the contrary, a right to restrain the publication of the work otherwise than as part of a newspaper or periodical, but this does not allow the author without the permission of the owner of the copyright to publish the articles separately on his own account.

Copyright may be assigned, but the assignment must be in writing and signed by the owner or his authorized agent. The assignment may be of all the rights comprised in the word "copyright" or of any part of those rights, it may be for the whole term of the copyright or for part only of the term. The right of assignment is, however, subject to this limitation, that no assignment by the first owner of the copyright, otherwise than by will, can give the assignee any rights extending beyond a period of 25 years from the death of the author, after 25 years the copyright reverts in the personal representatives of the author for the remainder of the whole copyright period of 50 years. The copyright in a work not yet written can be made the subject of what the law knows as an equitable assignment. On the death of the owner of the copyright, unless it has been previously assigned, the copyright passes to his legal personal representative like any other kind of property. The distinction between a licence to publish and an assignment of the copyright must be noticed. An assignment passes all the rights specified in the assignment which the owner possessed at the date of the assignment, but a licence only entitles the licensee to do that which the licence states. An assignee, since he is the owner of the copyright, can take proceedings in his own name for any infringement, but a licensee cannot do so, without the concurrence of the person who gave him the licence. The distinction becomes of importance in the case of agreements with publishers, for an assignment to a publisher entitles the publisher to deal with a copyright as though it were his own.

A royalty agreement or an agreement to publish on commission is a licence and not an assignment, unless there are provisions in the agreement indicating a contrary intention ; for example, that the publisher is to have a right to sue for infringement of the copyright. An author's agreement with the publisher often gives the publisher an option on future works of the author, and the law will enforce such provisions by restraining the author from entering into agreements with another publisher for the publication of such works or another publisher from seeking to publish them.

Lastly, there is the question of remedies for infringement of copyright. These are of two kinds : civil proceedings and summary proceedings in a criminal court. The owner of the copyright can enforce all such civil remedies by way of injunction, damages, accounts and otherwise as the law gives for the infringement of a right. Unless the defendant denies the existence of the copyright, the plaintiff is conclusively presumed to be the owner ; but where the existence of the copyright is denied, the person whose name appears in the published work as that of the author is presumed to be the author, unless the contrary is proved, and if no author's name appears, then the person whose name appears as that of publisher or proprietor is similarly presumed to be the owner of the copyright, unless the contrary is proved. An injunction to restrain publication is the most effective remedy, and if the defendant proves that he was not aware and had no reasonable grounds for suspecting that copyright existed, it is the only remedy available for the plaintiff. Unless he can prove this, the law regards all infringing copies and all plates from which those copies have been printed or are intended to be printed as the property of the owner of the copyright, who may therefore include a claim to recover possession of them or for damages for the wrongful dealing with property belonging to himself. In addition to these remedies, the owner of the copyright can also claim an account of the profits made by the defendant by reason of his infringement, but in that case he cannot claim damages also. The defendant may also be ordered to deliver up infringing copies, plates, etc., to be destroyed. In a Calcutta case it was held that a plaintiff could not recover damages



and also obtain delivery of unsold copies. This seems doubtful law, but the decision of the court in that particular case may possibly be justified, because the plaintiff had asked for the second remedy as an alternative, and not an addition, to the first. The Allahabad High Court has held, in conformity with English decisions, that an advertisement offering copyright material for sale is itself an infringement, restrainable by injunction, even though no copies have actually been sold.

In India civil remedies for infringement of copyright can be enforced in a High Court or District Court. The Indian Copyright Act of 1914 gives a criminal remedy for infringement, but it is not a remedy available in any court inferior to that of a Presidency Magistrate or a Magistrate of the First Class. Generally speaking, the remedy is available against any person who makes, sells, distributes or exhibits in public, or imports for sale, any infringing copy; and the penalty is a fine not exceeding Rs. 20/- per copy and not exceeding Rs. 500/- in respect of the same transaction. The penalties are increased on a second conviction to imprisonment not exceeding a month and to Rs. 1,000/-. The Court may also order the destruction or the delivering up to the owner of the copyright of all infringing copies or plates intended to produce them.

Since the Act of 1911 extends to all His Majesty's dominions, copyright exists in each part of those dominions, even though the work itself was published in some other part. The Act, however, gives power to His Majesty by Orders in Council to make it applicable to works first published in foreign countries also, if the copyright law of those countries complies with certain conditions laid down by the Act. Most of the countries in the world are now covered by such Orders in Council, but the United States of America is an important exception. The United States law gives no protection to the works of foreigners unless they are actually printed in the United States; and it is said that the printing trade in America has been successful up to the present time in preventing an alteration of the law, lest their own interests should be affected. The result is that many unscrupulous publishers in the United States profit from pirated editions of English works. The provisions of the Act relating to international copyright owe their origin

to the Berne Convention of 1887, modified by later Conventions having the same purpose. The members of the International Copyright Union thus established have bound themselves to give their citizens reciprocal rights in unpublished works or works first published in countries which belong to the Union, provided that the term of the copyright given is not to exceed that of the country where the work originated.

I have now set out as concisely as I can the main outlines of the law of copyright in India, and I should like to add a few words on certain difficulties with which, as I gather from a perusal of the Journal of this Association, Indian writers and authors are faced at the present time. It appears from letters published in the Journal during the last few months, that the attitude of certain editors and publishers has been causing a good deal of dissatisfaction, and I doubt if Indian authors would subscribe whole-heartedly to the description of a publisher given by an English poet of the 17th century, which I read the other day in an article on copyright in an American law review. "He is the caterer that gathers together provision to satisfy the curious appetite of the soul." I am bound to say, after reading these complaints, that the remedy for the present discontents of the profession is almost entirely in the hands of the authors themselves. The law is plain and affords ample remedies against the infringers of copyright, but there seems to be a general reluctance to take advantage of those remedies. I am well aware of the dilatory nature of civil proceedings in Indian courts, but I should have thought that the summary remedies given by the Indian Act of 1914 might be made very effective. Perhaps there is a natural reluctance on the part of individual authors and especially of free-lance journalists in no very large way of business to take proceedings against publishers and newspapers with much larger resources at their back than individual writers can command. Surely this is a case in which union is strength, and I can conceive no way in which this Association can be of greater service to writers and authors than by assisting them to form defensive or protective organizations which would take up cases on behalf of their members and teach unscrupulous persons that legal rights cannot be infringed with impunity.

The experience I have gained during the years I have been in India has taught me the difficulty of getting persons to unite for any object of this sort; and I have seen many cases, as my audience must also have done, where organizations have been enthusiastically started and have faded out when the initial energy was spent. An organization such as I have in mind requires above all things an energetic Secretary and a competent staff. It would be a whole-time job and therefore they should be adequately remunerated, but they must also be enthusiasts with a love both of literature and of justice and inspired with a determination to see that the members of the organization are secured the rights which the law gives them. It is unreasonable to expect a young and inexperienced journalist to fight the proprietor of a wealthy newspaper from which he hopes to make something of a living, but if a writers' organization takes up the case on his behalf, even wealthy newspapers will soon learn that honesty will pay them best. Such an organization might also do much to educate public opinion, which seems to regard the theft of newspaper articles as a venial and almost laudable act. I have suffered from this attitude myself, and when I have protested the offenders' only plea was that they had felt sure that I should not mind. I do not know if there is a standard form of publisher's agreement in India, such as is now generally accepted in England, but the English models are well worth considering and have stood the test of years. I agree that the vast area of India makes the problem a more difficult one than in the United Kingdom, and it is possible that provincial protective organizations, linked up with some central body might be required. But the slogans which I would advocate for your adoption are the words "self-help" and "united action". I do not of course rule out agreements on the subject of remuneration and kindred topics between recognized Associations of newspaper editors or proprietors and publishers on the one hand and organizations of authors and writers on the other, and such agreements would be the most satisfactory solution of the problem. I believe that there are newspaper Associations in India, but I am not sure about the publishers. A reputable association, whether of newspapers or of pub-

lishers, would appreciate that it was to their own interest to get all these matters put on a proper basis; and they ought to make every effort to compel their less scrupulous brethren to see reason. Why should not your own Association take the initiative on behalf of its members generally ?

### DISCUSSION ON THE RESOLUTION ON COPYRIGHT\*

SIR S. RADHAKRISHNAN

I call upon Mr. Masani to move the Resolution on Copyright. I hope he has not suffered under the present Copyright Law !

MR. M. R. MASANI :

I would like to move this Resolution :

“ This Conference is of opinion that the position in regard to the Law of Copyright in India is very unsatisfactory and that it is desirable that the matter may be reviewed and steps suggested by the P.E.N. to safeguard the rights of authors, both Indian and foreign, consistently with the public interest. The Conference also stresses the need for uniformity in the law for India as a whole, including the Indian States. The Conference therefore appoints a Committee consisting of Sir Maurice Gwyer, Mr. K. M. Munshi, Kazi M. Abdul Ghaffar, Principal A.A.A. Fyzee and the mover, with powers to co-opt, to study the question, to consult writers' organizations abroad, and to take steps to see that the law is suitably amended and other necessary measures are taken to that end ”

I am afraid, Ladies and Gentlemen, after the noble and inspiring talks we have just had, I am inviting you to descend from the sublime, if not to the ridiculous, at least to the very mundane. But I feared that with Sir Maurice Gwyer's absence and the dropping of his paper on this

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\* All the speeches made during the discussion were delivered extempore

occasion, there was every danger, at the rate at which we are going, of our dispersing tomorrow, having confined ourselves exclusively to altruistic and noble purposes. The trade union past in me rebelled at this, and I felt that it was time we did something for ourselves while we are still here. I do not feel like apologizing for suggesting that we act for a few minutes at least in a spirit of enlightened self-interest, and you will notice that in the language of the resolution the public interest is mentioned along with our own.

This matter of Copyright is a very disputed one. A lot can be said for and against it. Being privileged to read Sir Maurice's paper in the morning, I think I would not be taking undue liberty with his paper if I quoted a couple of remarks by Lord Macaulay, giving both sides of the question. Lord Macaulay described Copyright as "a tax on readers for the purpose of giving a bounty to writers. The tax is an exceedingly bad one, it is a tax on one of the most innocent and salutary of human pleasures." But, having said that, Lord Macaulay proceeded to give the other side of the picture when he said that, at the same time, "it is desirable that we should have a supply of good books, we cannot have such a supply unless men of letters are liberally remunerated, and the least objectionable way of remunerating them is by means of Copyright." The position as I see it in Sir Maurice's very learned paper, which I am sure you will be glad to read in the *Proceedings*, is that although Queen Anne is dead, an Act of Queen Anne still goes alive on the question of Copyright, and, amazingly enough, our own Copyright Law traces its descent from this Act of Queen Anne.

There are, however, many defects in that Law which require revision and modification. I may only mention just one—the fact, for instance, that the Indian States, or at least most of them, are still without the purview of a Copyright Agreement, and, although I personally have not suffered, if I may say so in answer to the President's query, there are occasions, many occasions, when books have been published in one or other of the Indian States, without any regard to the right of the author who may be living in a neighbouring Indian province. This obviously is a matter which might engage our attention. But mere laws will not quite solve

the problem. It is the practice of the Law of Copyright which requires more attention than its terms. The fact remains that repeated breaches of Copyright go past unattended to and without any action being taken to stop them. This has created, particularly in our press, a condition where breach of Copyright is the order of the day and not the exception.

The rights of foreign writers also need to be protected in our country, and I say it not out of any spirit of altruism or internationalism, but from sheer self-interest of the Indian writers. So long as articles of Professor Laski, or Bertrand Russell, or Louis Fischer, can be reprinted from foreign magazines without acknowledgement (or even with it) but certainly without any payment to the author, it is difficult to see why any Indian editor should wish to take the trouble of paying people like you and me. So, one of the steps that needs to be taken is for us to see that the rights of our foreign compeers are protected in our own country, as much for their benefit as for our own. Now all this requires action. A Conference of this kind could hardly take those steps, and the proposal that I make to the President is that we have a Committee of people who happen to be lawyers as well as authors, and leave it to them to suggest to us the amendments that are necessary as well as the measures of self-help which are called for on this subject. Sir Maurice has suggested in his paper two slogans "Self-Help" and "United Action," and I hope that by passing this Resolution, Ladies and Gentlemen, you will endorse those slogans.

PROF. ARMANDO MENEZES

I think my presence on the platform is superfluous after the excellent way in which the Proposer of this Resolution has defended it. But the Proposer is confessedly both a lawyer and an economist, and it was possibly necessary that one who is neither a lawyer nor an economist should support this Resolution on other grounds than merely those of enlightened self-interest. I need have no qualifications at all for supporting this Resolution. I have not got even that

excellent qualification, which is a grievance, for nobody has ever tried, either in India or abroad, to steal my writings. In fact, my grievance is that they have not tried it. It is thanks to the lavish hospitality of this State that I find myself in a room, in a hotel, sharing the room with a gentleman,\* one of whose poems I happened to translate long ago into English. Thanks to the absence of Copyright, so far we have not quarrelled. But my point is that we have reason to quarrel. If the Law of Copyright in this country is in the backward state in which it is now, it is not because there is a lack of lawyers in the country. In fact, there are too many lawyers in this country. But the Law of Copyright is what it is because writers have not so far insisted on their rights. Poets—and I profess to be one of the humblest of them—have been described as the unacknowledged legislators of mankind, but it is not the poets who in some matters legislate for mankind. It is mankind that legislates for itself, and I stand here, not as a writer, but as a representative, as a spokesman, of the man in the street, because it is the collective will of mankind, it is the desire, the need of mankind or of the people when it is expressed, that makes legislation necessary. That is the impulse behind legislation. It is true—and I was myself a fool once upon a time—I thought it was too mercenary for a poet to demand payment for his poems. I thought that to give away one's poems was much more worthy of a poet than to sell them. In the depths of my subconscious, I thought perhaps that giving away my poems rather than trying to sell them might make me more popular. I have been cured of my folly by a very bitter experience. I found that the poems that are given away are never read. There is a saying of Dr. Johnson's—I do not remember the very words and it was only a few minutes ago that I knew that I had to speak on this occasion—which now comes to my mind. When somebody asked Dr. Johnson whether he believed that men should demand payment for their writings, he promptly replied that only a fool would write except for money. I would not, of course, go so far as to endorse Dr. Johnson's dictum in its entirety. But there is a more modern dictum, which I think is Dr. Inge's, that writing is half a trade and half an

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\* Mr A. A. Kanekar

art. I am giving this hackneyed quotation because I think it is often misunderstood and it is necessary to grasp its right sense. The general impression that people get from this is that if writing is a trade, then there is a necessary adulteration of the art, and that if writing is half a trade, then we should be content with only half the art. I must say that I have no time to argue that this is not true, that it is possible for a man to write for money—at least write, not for the purpose of making money, but to make money out of the writing he has done—without any dilution of his vision, without tarnishing the purity or the integrity of his vision. Therefore, in supporting Mr. Masani's Resolution, I say once again that the Law of Copyright, which is merely a continuation of this principle that art should be paid for, is not only in the interest of men of letters, but of literature itself. It not only encourages writers to write more, it encourages writers to write better; and that is the reason why, because we have no proper Copyright Law in this country, not only our writers but their writings also are poor.

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KAZI M. ABDUL GHAFFAR

I feel that this question of Copyright Law in India is already long overdue, and I am glad that our friends of the P. E. N. have decided to take up this question under the guidance and advice of no less a person than Sir Maurice Gwyer. I am sure that once the P. E. N. takes up this question, it will do a great service to the cause of writers and literature in this country. This question of Copyright is really a vital question concerning Indian literature. My own experience has not been very fortunate, and I think the experience of many writers like me has been far from fortunate when dealing with the publishing trade as it is carried on in this country. You will be probably surprised to know that the writings of men like Sir Muhammad Iqbal and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad are today being printed and published, without the least consideration for their rights, all over the country. This means, not only that the authors or their heirs lose so much money that is legitimately their due, but it also



shows a lowering of the moral standard of the publishing trade and want of respect for what is written by our great men. Ruthlessly and with impunity we are trading with what has been the life-blood of men like Iqbal and Maulana Azad. This is a scandal, a public scandal, and I am very glad that the P. E. N. has at last decided to take up this question. Only recently the Progressive Urdu Writers' Association held a meeting at Hyderabad, and this question was discussed there and we considered the advisability of forming a kind of trade union of writers or a co-operative body of writers to handle this question. I think, now that the P. E. N. has taken up this question, the Progressive Writers' Association also will co-operate with this body in order to give some protection to the writers who have suffered a long time from the exploitation of publishers. With these words, I support the Resolution.

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MISS F. B. LUDINGTON

I wish to speak to you, not as a writer, but as a librarian. It has been my observation in India, being in a library here only a little more than a year, that the Copyright situation in India is even more perplexing than that of the United States, and we are far from satisfied with our own legislation in America. As a librarian, I have two suggestions to make to your Committee. One is that they should consider very seriously the matter of establishing a Central Copyright Library, where all the people of India will have access to at least one copy of every book which is copyrighted in India. I think it is particularly important to you at this time. It is my observation that much of your best writing is coming out in the form of pamphlets. Pamphlets are by their very nature the documents typical of the emerging renaissance in a literature. If you consider historically what has happened in England, in America, in France, you will realize that the age of pamphlets has always been a very important one to any emerging literature. Pamphlets, because of their nature, are quickly destroyed, being passed from hand to hand, and unless there is one Central Copyright Library in India, much of your contemporary literature will be lost to the future students of this country.

The second suggestion that I have to make to your Committee is in connection with the registration of all books copyrighted in India. Let there be some bibliographical publication of all these books. I am particularly eager for this, not for India alone, but for the profit of the rest of the world. If the peoples of the world are going to understand each other, they need to have access, not only to the legal or constitutional documents of other countries, but also to creative literature produced everywhere. We of other countries will not know about India and Indian literature unless there is a satisfactory bibliographical listing, and preferably some book or reviewing journal which will list everything copyrighted, giving brief summaries of the contents of each item. The export of books to other countries of the world is a subject which I should like to speak on, but my point is that if there is a proper bibliographical listing of all your Indian publications, libraries, librarians, students of India, all will at least know what is being produced, and remember, most of the work that is being written now is extremely important, not only to India, but also to the rest of the world

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SIR S RADHAKRISHNAN

I take it that this Conference is in support of the Resolution just moved, and duly seconded and supported. The suggestions that have been made will be referred to the Committee. If any members have any additional suggestions to make, they should address them to Mr. Masani, who I take it will be the Convener of this Committee.

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### DISCUSSION ON THE DESIRABILITY OF AN ALL-INDIA ENCYCLOPÆDIA\*

After an intermission of fifteen minutes, the Conference met again under Mrs Sarojini Naidu's presidency. The President introduced Sardar K. M. Panikkar to the audience

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\* All the persons who participated in the discussion spoke extempore. Sardar Panikkar also spoke extempore, excepting for the actual scheme which he read from his own printed paper, "A Note on an Indian Encyclopædia."

in a brief humorous speech. She described him as "this mischievous man...once a friend of the Congress...then a critic of the Congress...now an experienced administrator" and asked him to initiate the discussion on the desirability of an All-India Encyclopædia. Mrs Naidu added that Sir Theodore Gregory had undertaken to "hammer" Sardar Panikkar's proposal.

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#### SARDAR K. M. PANIKKAR:

I must thank you, Madam, for this short interval of fifteen minutes which enabled the House to get down from the heights of moral philosophy and from the high principles of human conduct to practical discussion. I did not have the good fortune of hearing the discussion on "The Development of the Indian Literatures as a Uniting Force." My thesis is to some extent the opposite. My thesis is that the growth of the Indian languages has given rise to a fissiparous tendency, and hence the question of re-creating the unity of thought in India has become a matter of the utmost importance. The most significant factor in the history of the last 150 years is that, along with the development of administrative unity, along with the development of a sense of nationalism pervading all over India, there has also developed an integration of national languages in the different parts of India, a development of dialects into great modern languages on the basis of which there has grown up what may be called the different nationalities of India at the present time. That is to say, what was a dialect a century or so ago has today become a great and modern language; and as all of you know, the development of national feeling, the identity of interests that go to make a nation, the unity of at least the forms of thought and expression which a common language produces as the connecting links between man and man, these have tended to create sub-nationalities of a strong character in India. Today when we speak of the Bengalees the Gujaratis, or the Maharashtrians, we are speaking of nations which, probably only 150 years ago, were not deemed such. It is undoubtedly the result of the growth of the

different languages of India, because it will be quite clear to every student of history that the independence of languages creates independence of thought and independence of forms. Now this is undoubtedly a measure of development. It is undoubtedly a great factor in the development of the Indian mind, because the declaration of literary independence by the languages of India has certainly given rise to new forms of creative expression, new experimentation with forms and new approaches to various subjects; and in every way it has created a wider and fuller sense of humanism in the different languages.

Undoubtedly the creative work of the Indian mind is done today in the indigenous languages. I do not by any means try to diminish or detract from those who write in English, but the major creative works in India today are done in the Indian languages. No one, therefore, would like to go back on what I call the declaration of literary independence of the Indian languages. But looked at from a critical point of view, looked at from the point of view of the national interest, we might also see that the getting away from the classical models, from the forms and thoughts which animated the languages about 150 years ago, has tended to create a certain division of mind among us. Before this declaration of independence, so to say, the Indian languages were moulded by the expressions in our classical languages. It was to Sanskrit and to Sanskrit forms that the Sanskritic languages looked up. It was to Persian or to Arabic that the languages dependent on it for their inspiration looked up. The unity of thought, the great Indian-ness of thought, which the Sanskrit language provided, and on the basis of which even the vernacular languages developed, helped us in our consciousness of Indianism. Today what helps us in our consciousness of Indianism are political institutions, our common difficulties, our common desires to establish a civic sense of nationalism, but not a sense of cultural unity. That, to my mind, has come from the breaking away from the single source of inspiration of the common forms of thought and of expression which the classical languages provided, which it is not possible for us to revert to at the present time. Whatever happens, there is no use our thinking that by more intensive

study of Sanskrit or by writing books on Sanskritic models or keeping the Sanskritic or the Persian traditions, we can cease to be modern men. New ideas have come, new forms have to be experimented with and new knowledge has come in a number of alluring shapes, which have all made a new approach to life unavoidable.

That being so, I cannot see that any proposal based on a going back to classical traditions to re-achieve the unity of Indian thought is possible or practicable. In what way, then, are we going to bring about this unity, or at least to keep alive that spirit of unity which animated us and which gave at least some general feeling of Indian-ness of thought and expression over so many centuries? Nobody bred in any part of India, reading the literature and language of another, ever felt, excepting for the language itself, any serious difference. That is to say, any person reading Tulsidas' *Ramayana*, whether he came from the Tamil country, or the Kan-nada country, or Maharashtra, felt absolutely at home. In the same way, any person who read the Tamil classics, whether he was a Gujarati or a Punjabi or a Hindusthani, if it were possible for him to learn the language, found himself at home in the thought of Tiruvalluvar or of any other great Tamil classic. That was so because there was then a certain community of mind. That community of mind has to be re-created today, for the independence of these languages, taking us no doubt on parallel lines, but lines—let me here borrow an idea from the Theory of Relativity—though parallel may diverge farther and farther as they proceed. Therefore, we have to think of some method of keeping up the community of thought and community of ideas which will keep us together, instead of keeping us further and further apart.

The suggestion—and it is a very modest suggestion—that I desire to put forward to you is that this can be done by producing an Indian Encyclopædia on the lines of, or very much like, the great French Encyclopædia movement of the eighteenth century. The philosophic conceptions behind the common mass of thought in India have to be reconciled, adjusted and reinterpreted to suit altered conditions. Thus, if a common body of thought definitely Indian in the

sense that the majority of Indians share it, is to be evolved, it has to be on a new basis, which, while conserving what is of value in the past, will incorporate all that is of value in the new.

The most satisfactory method of providing this new basis for cultural unity is by the production of an Indian encyclopædia conceived as a scheme for providing authoritative instruction in every subject—a modern *Mahabharata* which would be a fifth and ever-progressive *veda* for the future.

What a remarkable effect such an encyclopædia can have on life and thought is well illustrated by what the great French Encyclopædia did for France and Europe generally in the 18th century. Edited by Diderot, its contributors included such famous names, as Voltaire, Montesquien, Holbach, Turgot, Condorcet and Rousseau. As the writer in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* says, "No Encyclopedia has been of such political importance or has occupied so conspicuous a space in the civil and literary history of the century. It sought not only to give information but to guide opinion." It was in fact a deliberate and concerted effort by the greatest intellectuals of the time to create a common body of secular thought and opinion based on the latest available knowledge and on the boldest range of speculation. For the first time, Europe was provided with a comprehensive body of opinion, unconnected with religious organisations, on the basis of which the liberal civilisation of modern Europe has been reared. It provided the theoretical bases and the general inspiration of the great movement of thought known in history as Enlightenment.

An encyclopædia conceived in this manner has to be both conservative and revolutionary. The object should be to gather up and concentrate the illumination of the modern age, so that it can become available to the vast masses. It must embody positive purposes and a definite attitude to society and civilisation, in which case alone can it serve to check the spirit of disintegration and reunite the different linguistic units of India. It has to be conservative in the sense of bringing together the living forces of tradition, belief and thought and, by critical appraisal of their value, transform them into something dynamic for the present age. It

has to be revolutionary in the sense of attacking and demolishing ideas which have ceased to be of value, and also of establishing the pre-eminence of modern knowledge. The walls of Jericho awaited the trumpet call of the Angel before they fell. False beliefs, outmoded thought and purposeless clinging to ideas from which life has fled long ago, will not die and vanish of themselves. It requires a trumpet call, an active process of demolition, which can only be undertaken by a dynamic intellectual movement.

Such an encyclopædia will be a great scheme of national education at the highest level, where the results of the latest research and the implications of the most revolutionary modern thought will be made available through the Indian languages. Modern knowledge has become a vast and almost unmanageable mass. Further, it is daily increasing and opening up new avenues. We have to mould this enormous aggregation of learning, knowledge and thought available in the modern world to something which can be assimilated by the common people. In order to enable the common man to do this, we have to provide him with an apparatus of criticism of our accepted and traditional beliefs and of our peculiar institutions. A new and larger content has to be given to ideas and beliefs which can be interpreted in terms of modern knowledge. The confluence of speculation and modern science has produced an intellectual revolution whose message may, if properly directed, serve to create a common body of thought and opinion expressed in our terms as the basis of India's cultural unity.

It may well be asked how, when there are at least 9 major languages in India, a single Indian encyclopædia is possible. The scheme I have in mind is like the great proposal of a co-operative national history for India with which all leading writers and thinkers in India will be associated as editors and contributors. It will be in the nature of an overall pilot work where all subjects will be treated objectively, and subjects having an Indian interest will be treated from an all-India point of view. On scientific subjects, a national encyclopædia will be able to get the best authorities to write. There is a much better chance of authoritative contributions on such purely scientific subjects in a national venture.

than in a provincial one. When, however, subjects like Indian history, Indian architecture, Indian music, painting etc., are dealt with, the national encyclopædia will deal with them from an all-India point of view, leaving it to the encyclopædias in different languages to add and elaborate their own special contributions and interests. Taking music as an example, apart from the general treatment of the theories and principles of music all over the world, the special article on Indian music will deal in detail with the subject and will also show the differences between Hindustani and Carnatic music and give a general history of both. While keeping the same outline, the northern Indian encyclopædias will naturally elaborate the portion dealing with Hindustani music, and the South Indian versions will shift the emphasis to Carnatic music: In the same way, Indian history will be dealt with generally from the central point of view. But the Marathi encyclopædia will have special sections dealing with Maratha history in greater detail, the Telugu version in the same manner dealing with Andhra history, etc. The central unity of the subject will remain.

Some Indian languages have already their own encyclopædias. Dr Ketkar's Marathi encyclopædia and the *Viśva Vignana Kosha* in Telugu, which was published under the patronage of the Raja of Munagala, are but two examples. Bengali is said to possess an excellent encyclopædia and there may be others also. But the lack of any central direction, except, I suppose, what is provided by the *Encyclopædia Britannica* and the unavoidable lack of a national point of view in such local undertakings, cannot be overlooked in considering these works.

An encyclopædia undertaken on a national scale under the editorship of a committee of competent experts is likely to secure the collaboration of the leading experts in this country as well as outside. It could be made a real and magnificent contribution to learning, while local efforts undertaken on the basis of individual languages would not have the same advantages. From the point of view of editing work also—a work of the highest importance calling for scholarship over a wide range and special talents of a very high order—an all-India scheme will be able to secure co-operation of leading authorities in



different parts of India. The editorial committee will, in fact, be selected from among the best writers and thinkers in the country, an advantage which no provincial undertaking can command. The advantages of a national encyclopædia seem to be overwhelming.

The language in which the work can suitably be taken can only be English. Co-operation on an all-India basis is clearly impossible in any other language. We have to face the fact that, whether it is a national history of India, or a national encyclopædia, or all-India schemes of research, we have in our present circumstances no option but to use the English language as our medium. The encyclopædias in each of the Indian languages will, in the main, be translations of the parent work with such abridgement or amplification as may be considered necessary.

Such a scheme, if it is to succeed, should have the support of the Central and Provincial Governments and the active co-operation of the Universities and Research Institutes in India. The immediate step to be taken, if my proposal meets with the general approval of this Conference, is to appoint a small exploratory committee to examine the feasibility of my proposal, and if my proposal is found feasible to work out a practical scheme. I do not, as you will see, suggest that practical schemes can immediately be worked out. The exploratory committee that I am asking for will only consider the feasibility of a proposal of this nature, and I think that nothing can be lost in having this scheme examined and looked into from every point of view. So, even if Sir Theodore Gregory, as he has undertaken to smash it, does smash it, it may be desirable for us to know all the difficulties that we may have to face and also to see how they can be overcome. Therefore all that I have suggested is the very modest proposal that the scheme may be explored, the possibilities may be examined, and if it is possible at all to work out a practical scheme, the clear lines of such a scheme may be put forward. I do not think it is necessary for me to put forward any names. That is a matter for the Executive Committee of the P. E. N. to discuss and decide, and therefore, leaving this very modest proposal for your consideration and acceptance, I thank you.

DR C KUNHAN RAJA:

Friends :—

I was wondering whether there is any process of photographing the intellectual contents of persons like Mr. Panikkar, reproducing them, and issuing them in the form of a book. Then that would be the best Encyclopædia on Indian matters. But that is a matter for the scientists, and I do not dabble in science. When this question of an Indian Encyclopædia was coming and when Mr. Panikkar was explaining the methodology, my mind was wandering in another direction, that is, the consequences of putting the scheme into effect, in other words, where the scheme will lead to. And my mind began to wander back about a quarter of a century. When I was quite a young man, when I was a student at Oxford, I saw that very profound play, *Charley's Aunt*, where there is a statement "She comes from Brazil from which peanuts come." Well, you may wonder what it has to do with my speech. If any one asks me how I would be known—if at all I come to be known at any time—I will give some negative answers corresponding to that statement. I do not want to be known as coming from a country which is installing plants to produce new forms of motor cars. I do not want to be known as coming from a country which has got universal suffrage, or has got problems of sterling balances, direct dollar loans from London, or participates in international committees for the maintenance of peace and order. I will also give some positive answers. I want to be known as coming from a country that has produced the Vedas, that has produced the *Mahabharata*, that has produced great scholars, and great philosophers, and I may also say that I want to be known as coming from the country, the only country, which has produced some very great men to whom the council chamber was a recreation club, to whom the battlefield was only a sports field, and whose real profession was scholarship. I want to be known as coming from such a country, and for that an Encyclopædia is wanted. Well, there are international exhibitions where Indian *sari* borders or shampoo oils are exhibited. I want another kind of international

exhibition, of encyclopædias where our contribution to the culture of the world will also be exhibited. Well, we have got political representatives in various countries and there are educational attachés whose function is to secure hostel accommodation and admission to students in the various Universities, and if this is all that the Government of India can do, I want an Encyclopædia like this to make foreign countries invite cultural representatives from India, independent of government machinery. For this we must now take the initiative, and the P E N is the proper organization that can do it, not in opposition to the Government, but as a complement to the activities of the Government. I dabble in so many subjects and call it research, and in that kind of dabbling I have to look into various Encyclopædias. You will see that in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* India forms a very small part. Well, there is a Dewey Decimal system of classification for libraries, for American History, there are so many divisions and subdivisions, but when it comes to Indian History, there is just one division. That is the present position, and we cannot expect anything better. We must have an Encyclopædia by which we can present our contribution to the world, and it is only in that way that India can achieve her independence and equality, and not by a mere theoretical declaration of human rights. It is for this purpose that I want the first step to be taken in the formation of this Encyclopædia. The methodology has been well explained by Mr. Panikkar. I have nothing to add to it. I am the most unmethodical person in the world! Thank you, that is all that I have got to say.

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DR ABDUL HALEEM

Friends —

The subject which has been introduced here by Sardar Panikkar is a very important subject, the importance of which cannot be realized by the kind of discussions that are being held here. He has given you the instance of the French Encyclopædists. In our country, just now, there is need for a new humanism. We really require people like the French

Encyclopedists, people who are ready to break away from the shackles of old tradition and can at the same time preserve the best parts of our heritage. I am afraid that this idea which has been proposed here before the P.E.N. will suffer from a very great handicap. That handicap is that here in our country we do not have people like the French Encyclopædists. Where are the Rousseaus and the Voltaires? Where are the people who have cut away all their connections with the shackles of old tradition? Where are the people who have got the guts to go forward and say that they want to create a new world, a new humanity? I am afraid I do not see anyone here, not in this audience. Excuse me, Gentlemen,—we have to create something new. There may be people who have fine ideas about these things, but at this time when we are obsessed by matters very exalted, matters relating to the privacy of the soul, matters in which, if we dabble, we would drown ourselves in a sort of well of loneliness, at such a stage and in such an atmosphere, to talk of the French Encyclopedists and to talk of creating an encyclopaedia like the one the French Encyclopædists produced, is, I am afraid, rather too much. But, as the idea has been mooted, I would say. Let us make an attempt. But let us beware of all the pitfalls. Let us consider the contradictions apparent here just now between the exposition given by Sardar Panikkar and the exposition given by our friend here, Dr. Kunhan Raja. There is a lot of difference between the two expositions. One is talking of relations with the past, at least the past which keeps us bound to the higher atmosphere and does not descend to the earth, while our friend here is talking about the country which produced the Vedas and the *Mahabharata* and things like that. I cannot go into details. I cannot show you all the contradictions involved in these two opinions, but you see there are two supporters of the same scheme talking in two different languages. If we are going to have an Encyclopædia prepared by the joint efforts of Sardar Panikkar and Dr. Kunhan Raja, what kind of Encyclopædia will it be? Let us be clear about things. If we want to have a new life in this country, if we want to have a new humanism, then we want people who have that idealism. We want people who

will be a real help to us. And one problem more, which is very important. Sardar Panikkar talked of the help that he expects from the Central Government and the Provincial Governments. Did the French Encyclopædists get any help from the French Government? I think the French Government of that time would not have helped people like Voltaine and Rousseau. The Government we have is no better. We cannot expect them to help us in the compilation of an All-India Encyclopædia of the sort that Mr. Panikkar wants.

Let us therefore start the movement ourselves. If inside the P.E.N. there are some people who are keen about it, choose them. Do not make it a very high-sounding thing. Begin with a small encyclopædia, covering the important items. Let us start along these modest lines,—and then, if the movement develops, as the French movement developed, and new people come up in our country—I am quite sure they will come up—I am certain this scheme will succeed. On behalf of the Progressive Writers' Association of India, I would humbly say that we are quite ready to do our mite, the little bit that we can, in this scheme of an All-India Encyclopædia.

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DR. MULK RAJ ANAND

Friends —

No one after hearing Sardar Panikkar can disagree with the fundamental aim of an All-India Encyclopædia. I think this is one of the most important discussions which is taking place in our country for a long time. He has in his mind, as Dr. Kunhan Raja suggested, a very real and accurate conception, and I think that is all to the good. But I think it is likely that, because he had not got the time at his disposal, he could not give a complete picture which will explain to us the exact nature of the problem which India faces as a part of the modern world. What I have to say is only a footnote to what Sardar Panikkar said, with which I thoroughly agree.

It seems to me, coming as I do across the seven seas, that the air of the outside world has changed a great deal. But in coming here I find a certain resilience in favour of that extraordinary conservatism which has always held us back. I want to try to pave for you the bridge between these two feelings. It is quite possible that the blocking up of the lines of communication of the world has brought about this extraordinary isolationism. I do not think it will last very long, because fundamentally, whether in Europe where I was for six years or in India where I have been only a fortnight, I already see certain elementary questions which are, I think, common to the whole of humanity today. Do not let us rear our world outlook merely from a parochial or chauvinistic point of view. Our delegates should not enter such a discussion, which is really of a broad appeal to humanity, with such a narrow outlook. What I mean is precisely this. The world has discovered during the last six years of terrible suffering, turmoil and grim hardship the need for certain solutions which I call fundamental. Our age everywhere—whether in China, Russia, America or India—is I believe an age engrossed in the discovery of fundamentals. What are these fundamentals? I believe that you can start with all those things that Mr. Panikkar has in mind. The first great need is bread. A people who have sacrificed three and a half million dead in a famine certainly needs bread. Well, then, that fact is there. Our second fundamental is water. Water sometimes is contaminated. I find a lot of water, but not good water. I dare say we can do a great deal about getting enough good bread and enough good water.

Then comes air. Already, in this country, a certain amount of air is the property, shall I say, of the All-India Radio. There is no competition from any commercial organisation to the A I R. But air too is important, and we would like to see that the air is kept free.

Now bread, water and air; and, of course, we all know in our hearts the inevitable reality which, I suppose, Sir S. Radhakrishnan had in his mind when he talked of the soul—I think he had in his mind this aspiration of ours for many generations to be free. As intensely as other people—as

intensely as the resistance movement in France—we do hunger for and suffer for freedom, and so this is another fundamental we have in view.

There is another elementary and fundamental need on the plane of moral values, and on this point too I believe that human beings have now broken all barriers and come to realize certain very important spiritual truths. As I said yesterday, there is a spiritual side to the Russian type of materialism. It seems to me that Professor Radhakrishnan was perfectly right when he insisted on the spirit in man. I do not need to analyse this fundamental for you, but the truth to me is obvious, that we have in this age a rediscovery of the fundamentals, a common basis with the world for the formation of an Encyclopædia which can contribute the Indian knowledge, the Indian view, to the world. We cannot today cut ourselves adrift from the modern world. Those who think of doing so are living in the fourth century. For good or ill, we are part of "civilization." If that is so, two things are true which allay the fears of Dr. Haleem and the aspirations of Mr. Panikkar. Dr. Haleem's fears are very genuine, and I feel a natural sympathy for him. But if we widen our vision, we shall begin to see that we are the real inheritors of the past. At the moment, if I may say so, we distrust the old people. They have given us a world in such ruins. We feel we could have done better. But I have no disrespect for the old.

Then we come to the question of our cultural heritage. This question of our cultural heritage is, I believe, of fundamental importance for us. It is the greatest past of any single nation, and it is of great value to us. But do let us strike a mean between that past and modernity.

Mr. Panikkar does appreciate, does know,—I believe he realizes,—the need for a General Editor for this Encyclopædia. No one could fill the position better, I think, than Mr. Panikkar himself. If he brings together a number of people who will agree fundamentally on a minimum basis with him, he may be able to sow the seeds of a new knowledge among us. But Mr. H. G. Wells, who is well known to everyone as a writer of Encyclopædias, does not believe that anyone else who agrees with him knows as much or on the

same level as Mr. Wells knows. And so Mr. Wells wants to write it all himself. So also it is possible that Mr. Panikkar wants to write the Encyclopædia himself. Whether that is how it happens, or whether a combined All-India Encyclopædia comes to be written, I shall be happy to see either or both. What we need is æsthetic and genuinely beautiful criticism of our past which can create value for us in the present. I thank Mr. Panikkar for the proposal, and the knowledge and wisdom that he has given us.

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MR A. S. P. AYYAR :

Friends —

I have been asked, just as I stepped on the platform, whether I represent the young or the old. As you see, I represent both. I am very proud of the Vedas, but I am very proud also of the new democracy, the brave new world which is coming after this war. I like theism, but I like atheism too. I like God, but only if he is a good God.

Now Sardar Panikkar has put before you a most wonderful idea, the idea of a new *Mahabharata*. Emerson said 'Let us sit down and write a new Veda. Of the Vedas,—though I do not agree with the opinion,—a Chola King of the 8th century said "The Vedas were written by fools, knaves and demons, because three-fourths are ununderstandable, one-eighth has no significance, and one-eighth is mere tomfoolery." I, of course, differ from this view, being a Vedic Brahmin myself. I welcome Sardar Panikkar's idea of a new *Mahabharata* for just this reason. The Vedas were originally meant only for the Brahmins. The policy of secrecy led the Kshatriyas and the Vaisyas to be excluded, then even the Brahmin women to be excluded, and finally the majority of the Brahmins themselves to be excluded, leaving the Vedas in the hands of a few persons who could never make out what the Vedas were! The *Mahabharata*, on the other hand, was an *itihasa* which anybody could read. That is why the *Bhagavad Gita*, the great scripture known to all mankind irrespective of caste, creed, sex, colour, or country, is embedded in the



*Mahabharata*, and not in the Vedas. So I welcome Sardar Panikkar's idea of a new, modern *Mahabharata*.

An Encyclopædia is not at all new to India. India was the first to write encyclopædias. The first, of course, was Kautilya's *Arthashastra*, written in the fourth century B.C. Then came Tiruvalluvar's *Kural* in Tamil, in the first century A.D. There was another work, *Yuktikalpataru*, written in the eleventh century A.D. by King Bhoja. Long after these came the *Encyclopædia Britannica* and other works of that kind. One great difference between our ancient encyclopædias and the one proposed by Mr. Panikkar is that he envisages many authors, and I think quite rightly. Dr. Mulk Raj Anand has expressed his fear of many voices speaking contrarily. Well, then, let Mr. Panikkar write his own Encyclopædia, if he as Prime Minister of Bikaner can get some other Ministers to do all his work. You know I have great confidence in Mr. Panikkar, because he comes from Malabar, my own district. Malabar has been noted as a land of astrologers, physicians and magicians. Now in any of these three capacities he can complete his Encyclopædia. As an astrologer he can predict when it will be completed, when it should be begun, as a physician he can decide what are the healthy elements in our heritage, what are the sick elements, and how the former can be preserved and the latter destroyed. And as a magician, he can make us believe that what he says is right!

I agree with Dr. Haleem who said that there are no Rousseaus and Voltaires in modern India. We are all so wedded to caste, creed, outdated superstitions and also modern superstitions. We have not that free air of eighteenth century France, but we do not want it for our particular purpose. My idea in this Encyclopædia is not to propagate our beliefs. Let our Encyclopædia be a collection of facts. India is fast changing. Many beautiful and curious things are disappearing. Our folk songs, our folk dances, our beautiful traditions, all are going away. Even our mythology will disappear unless we preserve everything now in an Encyclopædia. Many birds are killed by men, many beasts are disappearing because men want more space. So in India we want to have an Encyclopædia describing both the things that

are disappearing and the things that are there I want a section in it showing the flora and fauna of India. Another describing the vegetables of India. Another chapter may be devoted to the sweets of India, and still another to the savouries of India. Mr. Panikkar said that languages divide, I say, the stomach divides! The whole world revolves round the stomach. Ask a South Indian who is afraid to come to the North - he will unhesitatingly reply, "I cannot get Tamilian food!" You will see thus that the foods are as important as dividing boundaries. But just as an Encyclopædia can connect the languages, it can connect the foods no less.

I emphasise the appeal of Dr. Haleem that we should not depend on the Central Government or the Provincial Governments. All existing Encyclopædias give India very little space. Before the Copyright Act is amended, let us translate or borrow as much from the Encyclopædias of other countries as possible, from wherever we can. I have till now tried\* only one Copyright Act case. The author brought a case that his book had been copied from by another author, but the latter contended that his book was not his book but a combination of three other books, and there they were! The case was withdrawn. So I say, knowledge does not belong to any one province. The Aryans sought knowledge even from the Chinese. I have got great respect for thieves of knowledge, not for thieves of materials. If a theft is committed for distributing knowledge to the people, and if the man has to suffer imprisonment by breaking the Copyright Act, well, let him do it.

The *Encyclopædia Britannica* is a very good work, but it has a thorough prejudice against India, owing to sheer ignorance. We should not repeat it. Let us compile an Encyclopædia of all available facts wherever they can be found. Let the critics, when they arise, write their criticisms in a separate book, because I do not believe that facts should be confused with criticism. It invariably creates prejudice. Even when stating opinions, we express opinions in our own way without studying the facts. The witnesses who come to our courts can easily be divided into three categories, liars,

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\* Mr. Vyvar is the District and Sessions Judge at Chittoor.

damned liars, and experts When you get this classification, you can easily see why we should beware of dogmatic opinions.

I therefore make three appeals to Sardar Panikkar The first is out of an ancient text

*Sarvam paravasam dukkham,  
Sarvam ātmavasam sukham*

Everything dependent on others leads to sorrow, while everything dependent on oneself leads to happiness Depend on none, Mr Panikkar You can produce an Encyclopædia without asking the help of the Government of India and of the Provincial Governments, with whose opinions you must be very well acquainted The second thing is, let Mr Panikkar confine his Encyclopædia to a statement of facts, taking the aid of the many eminent men in India today, as well as outsiders Even outsiders,—because I do not pretend that the people of Aryavarta know the beauty of their paintings and other works of art more than the enlightened people outside So let Mr Panikkar take all help from inside and outside, wherever help is offered free, because in this enterprise we cannot afford to pay The third appeal I make to him is that his Encyclopædia should be as cheap as it possibly can There is no use having costly books Recently, I went on a tour to a certain district and visited a library The librarian proudly said “We have valuable books here, including the *Encyclopædia Britannica*” I asked him, “Does anybody read this?” And he replied, “Yes” I took out a volume with uncut leaves “They must be very clever,” I said, “to read without cutting the leaves!”

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RAO BAHADUR P C DIVANJI—

Friends —

I had no mind to speak this morning However, when I heard some remarks being made that the new world should be built upon quite a new foundation, my blood began to boil. Because, as you know, I am an old man I was brought up in the old tradition, but I am living in a new world, and I hope to live for fifteen years more at least, and that is the reason why I cannot see the old civilisation being consigned

to dust and your simply building on new foundations, which have no solid principles of civilisation at all. The West is yet fumbling as to what the right principles of conduct are. They are flying from one principle to another, but like the rock of the ages our civilisation is there. Another civilisation is being tried, and there have been during the last 400 years, during which the Western civilisation has come to the forefront, so many wars, so many crusades, so many conflicts among the nations. There is nothing that is stable there. Everything is in a melting-pot. And the West should come to India still to learn the real principles on which human society should be based.

We must congratulate and heartily co-operate with Sardar Panikkar, when he has put forward a very wholesome proposal of having an Encyclopædia of all languages and all subjects, prepared on the principles of the *Mahabharata*. It is for that purpose, while supporting the proposal, I want to take you to the old far-off days in which the *Mahabharata* was composed. But the date is not certain. I have read several works and several essays written on the age of the *Mahabharata*. But it is an open question still....

I will wind up my remarks, since the President says that my time is up, by declaring that if there comes an opportunity for persons to break the old civilisation and build up a new one, quite on new foundations, after having destroyed the old foundations, I will be the first man to come forward and take the lead in the matter and see that it is not done.

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SIR S. RADHAKRISHNAN.

The idea has been put to us, and Sardar Panikkar's suggestion is that the matter be referred to the Executive Committee of the P.E.N. All-India Centre, who will examine the feasibility of producing an All-India Encyclopædia on the lines suggested or on other lines. So all that we have to do is to refer the matter to the Executive Committee of the P.E.N. I hope that is unanimously accepted by the Conference.

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Here the Morning Session ended.

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very parents of the Universe (*Vāgarthāvivā samprāṅktau Vāgartha-Pratipallayā. Jagataḥ pīṭātau Vande Pārvatī-Paramāśvaram*). It may be noted that even in his poetical flights Kalidasa does not soar away from truth and philosophy. He treats *Vāk* or Word as *Prakṛiti* and its inner meaning or thought as the *Paruṣha* (*Siva*) who vitalises *Prakṛiti* (*Parvatī*) as *Sakti*. But the ecstasy of mere poetic fervour is not always a sure approach to Truth. The poet "of imagination all compact" with "his eyes in fine frenzy rolling" misses the vision of Truth. It is left to the *Rishi* or the Seer of the *Rig Veda* to grasp the Truth of the matter, that of the mysterious relationship between Thought and Word.

My topic is ancient Sanskrit literature and the suggestions that it may give for the evolution of new literary forms. The subject is too vast and deep to be treated adequately within the limits prescribed by this Conference. I can only hope to touch its mere fringe on the present occasion.

I take the *Veda* as setting the norm or standard to which later Sanskrit literature conforms and corresponds. Indeed the *Rig Veda* is the root of the entire Tree of Knowledge represented in the vast body of Sanskrit literature in all its offshoots, branches and ramifications. The *Rig Veda* (I, 164, 45) states how only a fourth of cosmic Thought is captured by the language of Man which is called the *Laukiki-Bhasha*. It states the philosophical position that what is rendered explicit and manifest in the creation is only a fragment of the Implicit or the Absolute. The Absolute cannot be bound by the limitations of language.

Therefore, the *Rig Veda* devotes itself to making the best of the fundamental limitations attaching to language as the vehicle of Thought. First, Thought has to be comprehended in its entirety. The means of this comprehension are to be found in sustained and concentrated contemplation of Truth or Thought. Such contemplation depends upon the discipline and training of the mind. The training of the mind means its progressive detachment from Matter, contact with which contaminates the Mind. This process of purification of the Mind is the process by which the individual mind or soul is joined with the Universal Mind or Over-soul. By this constant conjunction (*Yoga*) with the Universal Mind that

has outshaped itself in Cosmos, the finite mind has its potency infinitely increased and becomes the vehicle of the highest knowledge and omniscience, while by disjunction or *Viyoga* the mind wears itself out in running after objects and pleasures of the moment till it is rendered impotent by its objectivity. Bergson has very well explained this truth: "The mind should be withdrawn from the world of Matter which imposes upon it its spatial forms and thus arrests the natural creativity, inwardness and suppleness of conscious life. Consciousness in shaping itself into intelligence, that is to say, in concentrating itself on Matter, seems to externalise itself. It is only when the self brackets itself out from the realm of things that the psychic processes regain their normal ways. The individual's consciousness, delving downwards, reveals to him, the deeper he goes, his original personality, to which he may cling as something solid, as a means of escape from a life of impulse, caprice, and regret. In our innermost selves, we may discover an equilibrium more desirable than the one on the surface. Certain aquatic plants, as they rise to the surface, are ceaselessly jostled by the current, their leaves, meeting above the water, interlace, thus imparting to them stability above. But still more stable are the roots which, firmly planted in the earth, support them from below." (*Morality and Religion*, p. 6). The Upanishads also have a similar conception where the universe is likened to a peepal tree rooted in the universal consciousness (*Urddhavamulam*), spreading its branches and leaves as Life and the phenomenal world.

Thus pure Thought or Truth first reveals itself to the Mind meditating on it. The next step is for the seer of Truth to give expression to his inner revealed knowledge in language which others can understand. The highest knowledge fashions its own mode of expression and utters itself out in accents, syllables, in the minimum of words conveying the maximum of sense. The Vedic mystical syllable of Pranava or Om, for instance, contains within itself a world of thought to be comprehended by arduous meditation. Sometimes, the sound or syllable itself is self-sufficient and its recitation by itself reveals its meaning. Here, sound and sense, thought and language, are inextricably linked together and do not appear as separate entities. *Sabda* itself is

Brahma. In the beginning the Word was God. Thus the Veda attaches great importance to the Word and its proper pronunciation. A specialised literature was called for to teach pronunciation of the sacred text as an art by itself with its own technique. Regulated and scientific pronunciation was required to awaken the rhythm and vibration by which the words uttered unfolded their own meaning to the person uttering them. More is meant than meets the ear. *Śruti* or hearing was thus an important avenue of knowledge. A whole philosophy called the *Sphota Vāda* rests on this position. The position has been further taken up by the great philosopher Jaimini who in his *Prva Mimamsa* explains the view that every word of the Veda has such a cultural value and spiritual efficacy of its own that the words of the Vedic texts must be recited in the prescribed manner and also in the order in which they appear in the texts in order that their full effects may be acquired. This kind of regulated recitation of the Vedic texts is possessed of an independent mystical value which must not be missed and has to be achieved by a special training in Vedic pronunciation and phonology.

At the same time, it was always acknowledged and emphasised that every student of the Veda must not merely master its words and sounds, its accents and syllables, but must also look beyond them to their underlying inner meaning, for a word is always wedded to thought. It was recognised that the contemplation and comprehension of the inner meaning of the Vedic words were far more important and vital to education than their mere mechanical recitation and correct pronunciation.

But the fundamental point that emerges out of the Vedic literary form is that the sound of its word is an echo to its sense and has to be independently cultivated as an avenue to the knowledge and truth it seeks to convey. And the second point is that every such word is charged with a meaning that can be comprehended, not by the ordinary method of mere reading, but by sustained and concentrated contemplation. Not a single word in this form of literary composition can be missed with impunity as being unnecessary or superfluous. All the accents, syllables and words



of the Vedic text are indispensable links in the chain of its reasoning. Every link is inevitable as a logical necessity and cannot be replaced by another. There is thus established a complete organic connection between word and thought. The texts are made the medium and vehicle of so much thought, so intense and profound, that a mere reading cannot grasp it. It can be assimilated only by a process of intense abstraction and subjectivity following the mere reading. The ideal was to make language carry the heaviest burden and the largest content of thought.

This conception of the high mission of speech as a vehicle of Thought is presented in several significant passages of the *Rig Veda*. One passage throws light upon the educational methods of the times by stating how pupils first learnt directly from the lips of their teacher the texts that were taught and then committed them to memory by constantly repeating and reciting them. The collective noise of their recitation is compared to the croaking of frogs. But when their mastery of the words and the text was thus achieved by mechanical repetition, the pupils had to undertake the more arduous task of fathoming their inner meaning. This they could achieve only by a process of intense subjectivity and contemplation in the manner of the frogs going into sleep and silence after the rains. Then when enlightenment was achieved by this process of silent, solitary contemplation they burst out into speech (*vacham avadishuh*) like frogs quickened into activity by the clouds (*parjanya*) after a year's slumber.

This Vedic literary standard and technique, by which words are charged with meaning which cannot be comprehended by mere reading but only by regulated meditation, carried with them their appropriate educational methods. The word of the Veda had to be heard and grasped by the ear as *Śruti*. It was not to be seen or reduced to writing. Vedic wisdom was not something to be merely read. It was to be lived, contemplated and assimilated as an integral part of consciousness. It was to be treasured up in the heart as a spiritual possession and not to be treated as something material and external to be stored up in MSS. or books to adorn a library like furniture. The tradition of Vedic learning was to impart it to the ear as a secret doctrine to be contemplat-

ed and realized, and not to make it a visible object available to all, irrespective of their fitness, and this tradition had been continuing through the ages, even up to the time of Kumarila Bhatta (of about the eighth century A D.) who has described the writing of the Veda as sacrilege. The *Mahabharata* condemns to hell those who write the Veda (*Vedanam Lekhakah*). Kumarila (*Tantra Varttika* I, 3, p 86) states "That knowledge of the Truth is worthless which has been acquired from the Veda, if the Veda has not been rightly comprehended or if it has been learnt from writing "

I will now conclude this exposition of Vedic literary methods by referring to a few typical *Rig Vedic* passages which emphasise how the mere word is to be treated as only unlocking the gates of learning which has to be acquired more by thinking than by reading. One passage emphasises the divine origin of language thus. "I ask what is the source of *Vak* (Speech) ? Speech or Word is God (*Brahmayam Vachah*). That Word I cannot comprehend as long as I am bound by the senses and objectivity (*ninyah sannaddho manasa charami*). It is the dawn of *Rita* (Supreme knowledge) which alone leads to the comprehension of *Vak* " ( I, 164, 37 )

" ( Among pupils studying together ) there may be one who merely sees the word but does not see its meaning Another hears it, but does not hear it fully He only utters the sound without understanding the sense (*dhrammatame Vochecharayati* ) But to a worthy pupil it fully unfolds itself like the devoted wife appearing in her best dress before her husband ( who can ' see ' and ' hear ' her fully ) " [ X, 71 4 as interpreted by Yaska in *Nirukta*, I, 19, and Durgacharya ]

" He who [ merely recites the Word without a knowledge of its hidden meaning (*kevalapathakah* ) ] wanders about with a barren cow (*addenva* ) not yielding the milk of desires [ *nasmai Kamandugdhe Vagdohyan* ( Yaska ) ] with the mere symbol (*mayaya* ) of speech [ *Vakpratiropaya* ( Yaska ) ], having only grasped its sound ( *Snsruvan* ) without its sense, like the tree not bearing any fruit or flower ( *Vacham aphotamapushpam* ) "

Sayana commenting on this passage further explains that the Veda or *Vak* as a cow does not yield its milk of supreme knowledge ( *Brahma Jnanam* ) to one who is given only to recitation of its texts

Yaska [ X *Nirukta*, I, 18 ] makes further interesting comments on these *Rig Vedic* passages :

“ He is only the bearer of a burden, the block-head ( *sthanu-rayam bharaharah* ) who having studied the Veda does not understand its meaning ( like an ass, *sthanu*, carrying a load of sandal wood whose weight it feels without enjoying its fragrance ) ”

“ Learning without understanding is called cramming ( *nigade-narva sabdya* ), like dry wood on ashes which can never blaze ”

It is also to be noted that the language of the Veda, with the high ideals to which it has to conform as the vehicle of supreme knowledge, could not but have been a product of intense research and effort carried on by the learned men of the times. The *Rig Veda* ( X 71, 2 ) tells how the learned met in their *sanghas* or assemblies, where through their discussions language was refined into the language of the Veda, like groats through a sieve ( *saktumiva lita una punants* ) This verse indicates how Vedic Sanskrit was hammered into shape out of the spoken Sanskrit of the times at learned assemblies, where it was the vehicle of philosophical discussions.

It may be noted in passing that the *Rig Veda* has given us several significant terms or key-words of modern public life. The term *Sangha* itself was not invented by Buddhism as is usually supposed. It is handed down from the *Rig Veda*. The very terms *sabha* and *samiti* we owe to the *Rig Veda*. The Veda is permeated by democratic tradition. The *Rig Veda* ends on a note of Democracy. Its very last hymn is a prayer offered to the Deity of Democracy which it was left to the *Rig Veda* to conceive first. It calls the Deity by an appropriate abstract name of *Samyana* or *Samagnana*, signifying the common and collective political consciousness spread among an entire people and shared equally by them. The hymn formulates the appropriate prayer for the worship of Democracy as an important Deity of the national Vedic pantheon. It enjoins upon the people their supreme duty of attending their national parliament to speak there with one voice ( *sam vadaddhvam* ) with a union of their hearts ( *Sahachityam* ), minds ( *Sammanah* ), policy ( *Samanamantra* ) and national aspirations ( *Samanākut* )

My plea for holding up before a modern assembly of

writers the Vedic ideal and technique of the literary art is that they are possessed of abiding value for all ages and climes. Besides, the Veda is possessed of a unique interest on several grounds. Firstly, it is the earliest book of India. Secondly, it is also the earliest book of mankind. Thirdly, though it is the earliest work, it is a work which does not contain primitive and crude ideas but some of the highest knowledge ever conceived by the human mind. Dr. L. D. Barnett first suggested the paradox that one has to see in the *Rig Veda* not merely the early streaks of light, the dawn of culture, but also the meridian and zenith of that culture. Taking Art to be long and Life short, the *Rig Veda* has sought to compress and condense within the smallest conceivable compass the highest spiritual and saving knowledge. It has thrown out in its hymns seeds of thought which have grown into any number of Philosophical Systems and Religious Sects which mark out Hinduism. The meaning of the Veda has been elaborated through systems and commentaries, appearing through the entire course of the history of Indian thought. The first of these commentaries is the Upanishads which offer solution of some of the most difficult philosophical problems which, according to Deussen, "baffle human intelligence to this day." Even the language of the *Rig Veda* is not a language that is growing, but a language that is full grown, like "Minerva born in panoply." Its entire grammatical mechanism is perfected; every tense, mood, every number and person of verb, is fixed, and all the terminations of the cases are firmly established, pointing to the later and more advanced inflectional stage in the life history of a language. As Bunsen has correctly commented, "Even these earliest specimens of Vedic poetry belong to the modern history of the human race." As regards the supremacy of the *Rig Veda* in thought, it is too large a theme to be treated here. Even its most popular prayer, the *Gayatri* Mantram, touches the height of human speculation in conceiving of God as the Supreme thinking principle, the Universal Mind breathing life into the individual Mind which cannot miss its majestic reality, while it defines Religion as consisting simply in living in God, to be constantly seen (*Tadvishnoh Paramam Padam Sada Pashyanti Surayah*). Even one of the Deities

worshipped in the *Rig Veda* is no less than God invoked in the form of Supreme Knowledge (*Parabrahmajnana*).

In conclusion, I may say that the Vedic ideal of literary composition in which every word must tell and convey the maximum of thought and in which no word must appear to be merely decorative or superfluous has not been entirely lost to later times. There is many a master of English literature who has sought to achieve this ideal in his own way through the medium of his own language with its difference in outlook and other conditioning factors. I may mention, for instance, a master of English like Shakespeare or Bacon. I do not, however, propose to mention any later English authors. But, generally speaking, modern literature is inclined to be too wordy, verbose, garrulous, grandiose, and rhetorical. One has to wade through pages of matter before understanding the point the author drives at. A model of English prose is the Bible of which every word is in its position as an inevitable natural necessity. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." What a wealth and world of meaning are contained in a nutshell in these few words! The meaning of these words cannot be understood by mere reading. They open up vistas of Truth which reveals itself only to contemplation. They are "the pure in heart" who feel the "one touch of Nature [which] makes the whole world kin," who are filled with a spirit of oneness and are identified with all fellow-creatures to whom they feel bound in ties of Universal Brotherhood. The individual whose heart has undergone this process of purification and expansion is no longer the narrow selfish individual dominated by the sense of the ego but a generalised and universalised individual, if he may be still called an individual. He is in tune with the Infinite. He lives in God and therefore constantly sees Him, as is stated in the *Rig Vedic Prayer* cited above. In modern India, Mahatma Gandhi stands out as having achieved this high literary ideal in his compositions. He is so widely read that it is not necessary for me to cite examples of his literary art. He ranks today among the greatest masters of English prose, as is admitted on all hands. Let me conclude this discourse by a citation which I make at random from his writings.

"Brahmacharya does not mean mere physical self-control. It means much more. It means complete control over all senses. Thus, an impure thought is a breach of Brahmacharya, so is anger. And since thought is the root of all speech and action, the quality of the latter corresponds to that of the former. Hence perfectly controlled thought is itself power of the highest potency, and can become self-acting. That seems to me to be the meaning of the silent prayer of the heart. If man is after the image of God, he has but to will a thing in the limited sphere allotted to him, and it becomes."

(*Harijan*, 23rd July, 1938)

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After Dr. Mookerji's paper, the Afternoon Session concluded

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## PART III

**THIRD DAY: Monday, 22nd October 1945**

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## Morning Session · 9 a.m.

The Third Day's proceedings commenced at 9 a.m. as usual.

MRS. SULOJINI NAIK

For once in my life I am going to obey doctor's orders and keep quiet if I can, and ask Madame Sophia Wadia to do my duty today—and this will include the ringing of the bell three times when speakers exceed their time. If it had not been for Madame Wadia, there would have been no P. E. N. Centre in India, and if it had not been for Madame Wadia's courage and faith, many of us would have found it difficult to visualize a Conference of this kind. She is really the true picture of the link between Europe and India, and I think we owe it to her that we should do her the honour today of putting her in the Chair. I am doing it, not because I am making a virtue of necessity, but I have felt from the very beginning that she ought to take the Chair for one of the sessions, and she is going to do it for the full session today, and she is going to speak to you also at the end. You know she is a great orator, and if you do not know it, you will know it today.

MADAME SOPHIA WADIA

We have a great deal to accomplish during this morning session, and needless to say we count on the co-operation of all of you. The items on our programme are before you. The first is a discussion to be introduced by Dr. K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar, a fellow P.E.N. member and a very good friend, serving now on our Executive Committee, and having always given full co-operation to the cause of the P. E. N. in India and internationally. The subject is "Interplay and Circulation of Thought in the Modern Indian Literatures." It gives me great pleasure to call on Dr. K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar to lead the discussion.

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## DISCUSSION ON "THE INTERPLAY AND CIRCULATION OF THOUGHT IN THE MODERN INDIAN LITERATURES \*

DR K R SRINIVASA IYENGAR

Madam President, Fellow Members of the P E N, Ladies and Gentlemen —

In the first place, I should thank Madam President for introducing me so generously, for introducing the introducer of the discussion with so much generosity, a generosity which, of course, I do not deserve. A few days ago, when I received a telegram from Madame Wadia asking me whether I would introduce this discussion on the interplay and circulation of thought in the modern Indian literatures, I said 'Yes' without thinking more about it. That was the time when I was supervising the college examination, and I thought that if I could ask my students to answer all sorts of questions, I too should readily subject myself to a similar examination at the hands of Madame Wadia. But later on, when I tried to understand the subject assigned to me, I found myself in difficulties. What exactly was meant by "Interplay and Circulation of Thought in the Modern Indian Literatures"? The two key words are "interplay" and "circulation". One is a sporting metaphor, the other is a medical metaphor, and together they make a mixed metaphor. Unfortunately, I am not a sportsman, and though I am called a doctor, I am not a medical man. But thinking about the juxtaposition of these two words, I concluded that a correct understanding of this mixed metaphor would lead to the answer to our question. When a man feels dull and lethargic, he is inclined to play tennis or billiards, and immediately there is a vigorous circulation of blood in his system. So, perhaps, Madame Wadia by giving me this subject thought that, if I were sensible enough, or intelligent enough, I would find the answer staring me in the face. For, as with the human body, so it is with literature. If our literatures are lethargic, with a little interplay—either by exchanging blows or by vigorous and friendly handshakes—a circulation

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\* All the speakers spoke extempore

of thought can be introduced into the system of Indian literatures, and this will be a very beneficial thing indeed.

But before proceeding further, I want to emphasize one thing, and that is this—during the last two days, in all our discussions we have taken certain things for granted. Thus we have assumed that there are certain values in life which are these values which are threatened from various sources, that we must therefore counteract these forces, that we must save these values—that we must preserve these values. We have tacitly assumed further that humanity is a thing which is endangered, which ought to be saved, which ought to be preserved. We have assumed, again, that civilization with all its present limitations is nevertheless a thing which is there, which is threatened, which ought to be somehow saved and preserved. We have assumed, above all, that in India our culture with all its complications and bewildering variety is a thing which is really there, which is also threatened from various sources, which ought to be saved and preserved at any cost. That is the reason why the day before yesterday Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru so beautifully and with such restraint and wisdom introduced the discussion on the development of the Indian literatures as a unifying force. That is the reason why yesterday Sardar Panikkar made a plea for an All-India Encyclopedia, so that the dangers which seem to threaten these values may be counteracted in time, so that our civilization and culture may be saved and preserved, so that the human personality may not be allowed to be crushed. That is also the reason why this discussion on the interplay and the circulation of thought in the modern Indian literatures has been included in our programme.

I suppose I am expected to initiate a discussion as to how best the interplay and circulation of thought in the modern Indian literatures can be promoted, and promoted fruitfully. Here, again, I want to emphasize one thing. The medical metaphor is handy, being both useful and suggestive, for literature can be compared, not inaptly, to the human body. When I talk of myself, for instance, when I ask myself this most crucial of questions “What am I?” various answers are possible. The first answer would be “I am what I seem to be, what I appear to be with my coat and

hat and all that " I recently read a story in a Tamil magazine—it is but a story—that Mr Attlee had stolen Mr Churchill's coat. Another metaphor! But whether Mr Attlee puts on Mr Churchill's coat or not, Mr. Attlee is Mr Attlee, for better or for worse, and Mr Churchill remains Mr. Churchill. So the coat is not what makes a man. Similarly the constituents of the human body are not what make a man. A very clever scientist has computed that, according to the controlled rates, if you sell the human body—the average human body—the chemicals and the various things it contains, phosphorus, carbon and the rest of them, will fetch you about Rs 5/- But certainly a man's value is more than five rupees. Not even the thoughts which we gather from various sources—the ideas that professors pump into their pathetic, unfortunate students' heads—not even these could be equated with Man. We know that there is something deeper than all this, something higher, something that integrates all this and yet transcends all this. I do not call this the 'soul,' not wishing to irritate people who see red when the 'soul' is mentioned,—but I may call it the 'spark' that keeps the rest alive. If I feel weak, I may recoup my health in a sanatorium. There are cures for high blood pressure and low blood pressure. But, as Othello says in a famous passage

“ once put out thy light,  
Thou cunning'st pattern of excelling nature,  
I know not where is that Promethean heat  
That can thy light relume ”

When the inner spark is extinguished, there is no art, no craft, no science, that can renew that spark. So although we can talk of the interplay and circulation of thought in the modern Indian literatures, these things can have efficacy only so long as the soul in them is alive. A man is alive as long as he is endowed with that spark. If that spark is gone, his doctors and all medical attendance will be of no avail. Likewise the people of a country—humanity itself—has a soul. It is this which we must try to preserve, and if the soul is preserved, its emanation, literature, will also be preserved and cherished. Granted this assumption, then,

granted that the soul, the spark, has to be preserved, for without it nothing else matters, it does not, however, mean that we need not eat, or that we need not participate in the rich hospitality of the Jaipur State, or that we need not dress as elegantly as our pockets will permit. It was an implicit confession of our faith during the past two days that the spark is there, and that it should be preserved and not allowed to be put out either through lack of fuel or on account of unwelcome accretions.

But though a man may be alive, he may live in a state of suspended animation, sleeping like the impossible Kumbhakarna. It may then be necessary to wake him up. Sometimes you may wake up a man by merely touching him—or it may be necessary, if he is less sensitive, to shake him or even to sting him into activity. In the eighteenth century, there was a period of stagnation or suspended animation in India. The Western impact had been somewhat of a thunderstorm to the country, leaving it for the time being in a confused and pitiable condition. Shah Jehan's imperial Delhi was now a city of terror and confusion. A numbness had seized the people. Vitality and the zest for life were at vanishing point, spirituality glowed but in fitful embers, and all intellectual activity was nearly at a standstill. The Western impact, however, although many of its consequences were undesirable, caused also some good. As Sri Aurobindo has pointed out, the Western impact infused into India three needed impulses. "It revived the dormant intellectual and critical impulse, it rehabilitated life and awakened the desire for new creation, it put the reviving Indian spirit face to face with novel conditions and ideals and the urgent necessity of understanding, assimilating and conquering them." Subsequently, there was a series of religious, social and political upheavals in the country, and every one of them played its own part in our renaissance. The coming of Christianity to India was responsible for a literary as well as a religious revival. The Christian missionaries set up printing-presses in the country, translated the Bible into the various Indian languages, and issued grammars and dictionaries, some of which remain authoritative works to this day. The importation of Christianity led in course of time to considerable re-thinking and heart-searching, and

movements like the Brahma Samaj, Arya Samaj, and Prarthana Samaj gained innumerable adherents. Presently there arose the new star at Dakshineswar, Ramakrishna, and Hinduism in its purity became a power once again in India.

The Brahma Samaj was but one of the great Rammohan Roy's phenomenal contributions to the Indian renaissance. He was also the force behind much urgent social reform like the abolition of *sati*, he was an active propagandist in favour of English education, and he was besides an effective writer in English and Bengali. Like the religious renaissance, other movements too started in Bengal, and then spread over the whole country and were reflected in life and literature. The political revival, beginning with Rammohan again, and culminating in our own time with Mahatma Gandhi's electrifying clarion calls, has also brought about a vast reawakening in the country, in literature no less than in the other departments of life. Thus it is these religious, social and political movements that have effectively awakened the dormant literatures of India and given them a new lease of life.

It is clear, then, that the soul was not dead, but only sleeping. The waste land was not altogether a waste land,—it was possible to re-cultivate it. The British impact, the successive spiritual and political upheavals, the pressure of modern urban life and the polyglot culture it inevitably brings with it, the vogue of the Cinema and the Radio, the cosmopolitan and international spirit of our times, all are responsible in their several ways for the growth of the Indian literatures. Interplay of ideas there doubtless is between contiguous literatures like Marathi and Gujarati. Much more could be achieved if reliable translations from one modern Indian language to another appeared more frequently than at present. But in particular the English medium continues to stimulate the interplay and circulation of thought in the modern Indian literatures. The publication of a bibliographical magazine like our friend Mr S C Guha's "Indiana" is a useful venture and does promote interplay and circulation of thought in the country. Further, an organization like the P E N and conferences like this are capital ways of bringing people from the various linguistic areas together. During the past few days, we have met and

talked and felt one another's pulse, listened to music together, enjoyed magic together, dined together and gone sight-seeing together. But more than all these things, I think that only two factors can make a reality of the reawakening in our literatures and make them a unifying force in the country. One is the soul which we have managed to preserve, and the second is an integral enlightened leadership in the country. Fortunately for us, our leading politicians have been and are men of letters and men of vision. The Lokamanya was a fearless nationalist, he was also a subtle exponent of the *Gita*; Deshabandhu Das was a fiery politician, he was also a lyrical poet, if Sri Aurobindo was at one time the flaming apostle of nationalism, he is now also a poet, a mystic, a prophet of the Life Divine, Muhammad Iqbal was a poet and philosopher more than a politician, Maulana Azad, the Congress President, is also a scholar of repute and the author of a classic commentary on the *Koran*, Jawaharlal Nehru is a master of chiselled prose, a student charmed by the pageant of human history, and is the author of one of the greatest autobiographies of our time; and Shrimati Sarojini Naidu, our President, is poet and patriot both, and always in the vanguard of the nation. It is thus a lucky circumstance for us that the epic of our regeneration as a great and united nation is being written by our foremost leaders who are fighters as well as men of vision, and even men of letters. Politics are for the hour and politicians all over the world are most of them short-sighted people. But men of letters—and our leading politicians are men of letters—have the vision and the faculty divine, and there is no doubt that with the background of our culture—which is a composite culture, Aryan, Dravidian and Islamic—and with the unifying drive of an integral leadership in the country, we may be able very soon to outgrow the present period of frustration. Our immemorial Indian tradition and our progressive integral leadership are the forces that have determined, and still determine, the interplay and circulation of thought in the Indian literatures. Our best writers, whether drawn from Bengal or the West or the South, have succeeded in projecting before the sons and daughters of India a vision of both unity and variety. I hope



therefore that the present dissident and disturbing voices will not prevail. Let us rather persevere in the faith—for if we had not this faith we would not have had this Conference—that our men of letters will refuse to be daunted by the defeats of the time. Let us hope that all this interplay and circulation of thought will revitalize the nation and sting our poets and men of letters, not merely to sing the elegies of our present frustration, but more particularly to hymn in the not distant future the songs of triumph commemorating our baptism into a glorious rebirth.

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MADAME SOPHIA WADIA :

We have listened with great interest to the address on a very important subject, which is now open to discussion. It is my privilege this morning to announce the name of the worker who has been closely associated in the work of the All-India Centre of the International P.E.N. and in particular in the task of organizing this Jaipur Conference. I have great pleasure in calling a sister, a friend, a co-worker and my personal secretary, well known to all of you in Bombay, Dr. Eleanor Hough, to participate in this discussion.

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DR. ELEANOR M. HOUGH :

Friends :—

I have only a few ideas which I should like to share with you on this very important subject. Those of us who have been working with *The Indian P.E.N.* and with the books which the P. E. N. is bringing out on the various Indian literatures are making what contribution we can to the realization of the unity which actually exists among the different languages of India. It is not something that needs to be established, any more than human brotherhood needs to be established. But it needs to be realized and sometimes, when the members of a family see mainly the differences between themselves and distrust each other, a friend of the family can see clearly the family resemblances among them all.

Indian culture is essentially one. But on the question of translation there are several practical considerations to be borne in mind. There is the question, who is to make the translation, and Mr. Hermon Ould has given us a valuable suggestion by his reference to the panel of qualified translators which the P. L. N. in London is setting up. Why cannot the various literary associations in the different languages already have such panels of those who are qualified to be translators in the respective languages? Would-be translators should then get the endorsement of the literary association of the language for which, or from which, they wish to translate, because, just as not every man is fit to be a champion of truth, so also not every man is fit to undertake the ambassadorial function of translator.

But who is to translate is perhaps of even less importance than what is to be translated. Gandhiji has spoken very clearly on this point, emphasizing that only the best in the different Indian languages should be translated from one language into another. India has suffered culturally from the translation of much second- and even third-rate English writing into the different Indian languages. It cannot be denied that such third-rate literature, finding its way through translations into the Indian languages, has led to a certain debasement of the public taste.

There is no doubt much new writing that is lofty and inspired, but there is also much which is unworthy of being translated from one language into another. We should not condemn those who can find themes only in the morbid and the obscene. They are rather to be pitied as the victims of arrested imagination, which is only less unfortunate than arrested physical or mental development. But unless there are elements of goodness and of beauty in a piece of writing it is not true, and therefore it is not art. And there must be someone who shall at least exercise an advisory capacity as to what is worthy of translation from one language into another, and here again the literary associations can do a great deal by drawing up a panel of recommended books, not in the sense of condemning any books that are not selected, but only in order to specify the books that would worthily represent that language if translated into others. In some of

the European countries like Denmark, people were not allowed before the war to send out of the country foodstuffs which were not approved by the Government. And so translations should bear the endorsements of the literary associations concerned so that their success might be assured.

Indian hospitality has a fine tradition. It is worthily exemplified in the entertainment which we are being so graciously offered here in Jaipur, and when we entertain guests we put out our best, and not our worst, and that should be the principle which should guide our translators, remembering the words of a great poet that "as one lamp lights another, nor grows less, so nobleness enkindleth nobleness."

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PROF. D. V. POTDAR

Friends —

In the brief time at my disposal, I will offer a few practical remarks on the discussion that has been initiated by my friend Dr. Iyengar. Interplay and circulation of thought in the modern Indian languages is the subject of discussion. We want to find out practical ways by means of which this interplay and circulation, taking for granted that it exists today, can be made quicker and more alive. If that is to be done, I think we must apply our minds more seriously to the system of education that prevails in this country. It is necessary that each region, I should say regional part of India, should have a university of its own very soon established, and the members of the P E N, although they may be internationally minded in thinking of the unity of the world and all such very big things, cannot lose sight of the small measures which are quite necessary if the higher goals are to be reached. For this reason, the establishment of regional universities on a very sound and solid basis seems to be the first step that we should take. In these regional universities, I expect that the regional languages will be given their proper place. It is there that they will be studied. I do not mean in the least to say that it is in the universities that literature flourishes. Languages and litera-

tures flourish in the wider world, a fact which I quite realize, which I am not in danger of forgetting ; but the universities too play a part in the study of languages, and indirectly in the promotion of literatures.

In our system of education, the next step that must be taken is that when any regional university is established, the language of the region should be compulsorily taught. Along with that I want that a neighbouring language also should be made compulsory. That was suggested as early as about 1884 by the late distinguished Honourable Mr. G. V. Joshi of Maharashtra, a co-worker of the late Justice Ranade. But I do not think sufficient attention has been given to that suggestion. For instance, if I have a university in Maharashtra, I would make Marathi compulsory for the B.A. and at the same time make Kannada or Gujarati also compulsory. If you adopt this system throughout India, you will find that a greater study of the different languages, regional and neighbourly languages, will be conducted at these places and throughout the provinces.

Then, of course, we should exchange professors and exchange students from one province to another. They should go, not for four days only to enjoy the hospitality of a state like Jaipur or some other state, but should move among the people, feel the pulse of the people and their literature for a time and enter into the soul of the people. If you do this, you will be able to catch the spirit and you will easily see that throughout India the spirit is the same. The interplay is there, but there is want of circulation, which of course you can promote by the method I have just suggested.

The translations are there, but I am not a very great believer in translations. There are certain things which are untranslatable, like the spirit. You can understand it only by moving among the people. You cannot catch it in the stray phrases occurring within the covers of a book. I want this type of thing to be done on a greater scale than now and I suggest that some such practical steps be taken by even the members of the P.E.N. of the different centres and their representative writers who are here. They should advocate our ideals among the people, without always

harping upon our political grievances, giving advice to Mr. Churchill or Mr. Attlee, speaking from a distant village in India, which in my opinion is neither effective nor useful. Leave politics to other people. We have had our political conferences, economic conferences, industrial conferences, and other conferences, but this is the first time that the writers have thought it proper to come together in an All-India Conference. You say you are the most progressive people in India. But if you are, you should, now that you have organized this Conference, adopt practical ways and means for promoting your ideals, and not simply be lost in words and be content with fancy

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MR. NABAKISHORE DAS

Friends:—

On the first day, I showed by analysis how in ancient India the different provinces exchanged their ideas in literature. Sometimes we forget that though in India there are so many provinces, so many linguistic regions and cultural blocks, still there is interplay and circulation of thought, and this natural process is going on, not only in India, but throughout the world. But here we must confine our discussion to India alone. My friend says that we should not be lost in imagination, but that we must evolve some practical means to promote the interplay and circulation of thought. I remember in this connection *The Hindustan*, which was edited by Premchand, the great Hindi novelist. Those who have read that paper must remember how the languages of India were translated into Hindi in that paper. This then was a way to achieve our ideal. The other way is what we are today having at Jaipur, a Conference on an All-India basis where cultural leaders and thinkers of different provinces can come together and exchange their ideas.

Another step that I was thinking of and suggesting to Madame Wadia was that we must have English journals in India where the different provincial languages and literatures may be represented by translations. This will serve two purposes. We will have interplay and circulation of thought

within India as well as outside India. This will go a great way to cement or build the human brotherhood of the world. Though we have got so many provinces, so many cultural blocks, there is interplay and circulation of thought. In ancient India, we thought God was the supreme thought and all our songs were about Him. Now, instead of God, man has taken His place, and now we are singing the songs of man, and this idea is interplayng and circulating throughout India

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MR A. S. P. AYYAR

Friends.—

The subject is a very fascinating one, but I am going to confine myself strictly to five minutes. So I am going to speak only on a very limited aspect.

Interplay and circulation of thought are not unknown in India. In fact, they have been overdone. If you read the many poems in our languages about sending a message through the lightning, through a walking-stick, through the All-India Radio, etc., which are all variations of the *Meghaduta* of Kalidasa, in which the hero sends a message to his distant wife through a cloud, you will see that there has been too much of circulation. It may bring about high blood pressure. Original thought, new thought, is much more important than old thoughts rehashed and re-served like yesterday's meal left over and eaten today. Again, you will find that this is not confined to our country. In a famous Sanskrit play, Gandhari asked Duryodhana "Well, son, what do you want? You are dying a hero's death." And Duryodhana replied "If I deserve anything, may you be born as my mother in my next birth." The very same compliment is repeated in an American novel where a man says to his wife: "If there is another birth, may you be born as my wife." Take, again, the play in which a man who loves his servant-maid calls out her name in his dream, from which his wife comes to know of the woman with whom he is in love and gets everything out of him the next day. The same trick is repeated in many English novels, where the woman

finds in her husband's coat a piece of lipstick ! So also you find in many of our novels and stories that women can have only rosy lips and jet black hair, which is tiresome. Let the lips be sometimes only reasonably red, not coral red.

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DR ABDUL HALEEM :

Friends —

I am afraid my throat is rather congested today, because I have got a very bad cold, so I cannot put clearly before you this subject which is very important for us, because we are the writers of India who are gathered here. It is obviously our purpose to come together and to try to understand the different literatures of India. Our country has got many languages, and they are bound to have different aspirations, different kinds of thought which manifest themselves in their literatures. So it is obvious that we want to have more contacts and conferences like this. With all its defects—I am sorry I am using this word—with all its defects, we have made a good beginning with this, the first Conference, and I am sure those who are responsible for running the P E N Centre in India will continue this practice, if not annually, at least once in two years, of holding a conference and will invite more and more people. I know it is very difficult even for a State to accommodate and entertain a large number of guests, and therefore it will always be necessary to limit the number of invitees. At the same time, I would ask—even if this standard of hospitality is not followed or even if people are asked to pay for their board and lodging—I would request the authorities of the P.E N Centre to invite as many people as possible because that is the main idea of having a Conference like this. Representatives from different organizations and as many people as can be safely invited should come together, and they will all contribute to this interplay and circulation.

I am afraid our friend Mr Ayyar has brought this subject of discussion from the sublime to the ridiculous in such a way that it is very difficult to go back to the sublime, and I am not competent to go to the sublime. The great





which peoples of different modes of thought could express themselves. Not only one kind of ideas should come in that journal, but people having different ideas, those who believe in the soul and those who do not believe that there is a soul, all of them should be represented there. I am sure, I hope at least, that those who do not believe in the soul will also be represented in the journal I have proposed.

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MADAME SOPHIA WADIA :

This has given me an opportunity to mention that the question of a journal of translations has long been before some of us of the P.E.N. All-India Centre. But we have not had the resources at our command either in co-operation and labour or in money, and this is an opportunity to state that we are not wealthy in the P.E.N. All-India Centre by any means, and it was with great effort that we managed even the little that we have done. But with the co-operation of those who believe in working for the sake of the work and making that the motive, and not the fruits of their action, it will be possible to extend the work of the P.E.N. All-India Centre.

One other thing—there have been severe restrictions on paper supply. Even our small bulletin has been reduced in size and the programme which we had planned for this Conference, which was much larger than the one actually placed before you, was also impossible because we did not receive the necessary permission for printing it.

As to the right of all to put forth their views, that is essentially the creed of the P.E.N.—freedom of thought and freedom of expression. We believers in the soul have one great advantage. Friends, we do not deny the existence of the body,—we believe in the body because we are dwelling in that body. We are always ready to include amongst us the believers in the body, because they are part of ourselves. It is they who should, in their turn, with the same spirit of understanding and tolerance, include also the believers in the realities of the spirit and the soul.

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MR. GULABDAS BROKER :

Friends.—

The importance of translations has been stressed already, and it is superfluous for me to stress it again. But what I want to submit humbly is this. Pandit Nehru in his beautiful address about the languages and literatures of India as a unifying force first expressed the fear that perhaps the different languages and their different literatures might tend to provincialism, and I want to submit only one example that would show how that fear was not quite unjustified. I will just now cite an example, and we as members of the P. E. N. and Madame Wadia and others as organizers of the P. E. N. in India will perhaps see that this aspect of the situation needs stressing a good deal. One Gujarati gentleman stayed for years together in Bengal and graduated from the Calcutta University, taking I believe his M. A. degree in Bengali language and literature. So after years of study of the Bengali language and literature, he thought that the culture and the spirit that he had imbibed from Bengal should be repaid by him and he, as a son of Gujarat, could repay that in only one way, in other words by giving the best that Gujarati had to offer to the language and literature of Bengal. He sought permission from Mr. K. M. Munshi to translate one of his well-known works, *Prithvi Vallabh*, into Bengali. Because it was a labour of love and not for any money being got out of it and besides the reception that the book would get was of a doubtful nature, Mr. Munshi said. "All right, you can get it translated and printed and published, and there is no question of any money being paid to me." After translating the book into Bengali, he got it corrected by two of the well-known Bengali writers, and then he took it to a Bengali publisher. The response was not encouraging, and he moved from publisher to publisher, and there was nobody prepared to publish that beautiful work of Mr. Munshi's, in spite of the fact that Mr. Munshi is a writer very well-known, not only in Gujarat, but in all India. Thus the fear of provincialism's taking the thing in its hands and not encouraging the interplay and circulation of literatures is a real fear, that fear should be put before the whole public of I

so that it might be countered by positive action. We as a body of writers should try to see that the narrow provincial spirit is eradicated from all the languages of India.

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MR. S. C. GUHA:

Friends :—

Bibliography as a science or *sastra* is yet in its infancy in our country. Germany, Great Britain, the U.S A, and several other Western countries have developed the science to such an extent that authors, orators, scholars and all professional workers are provided in those countries with up-to-date information in their respective subjects. Nearer home, the bibliographical tools obtainable in Russia, China, Japan and the Philippines are not available to Indian scholars. Without bibliographies and full indexes, scholars cannot take advantage of what is hoarded in books and periodicals.

A periodical bulletin of Indian bibliography named *Indiana*, to which Dr. Iyengar made reference, was started by me from Benares in 1936, but it had to be suspended *sine die* when the war broke out in Europe. *Indiana* as a current index to published literature used to give for a time a little bibliographical service in a humble way to all scholars. The work was greatly appreciated by veteran scholars like Dr Ganganath Jha, Sir P. S. Sivaswami Aiyar and others. The publication can very well be revived and improved upon, if scholars will only help themselves. It will contribute a great deal to the proper dissemination of knowledge throughout the country. We are certainly far behind the times in not having such a bibliographical periodical yet. Is it not time now that those of us who have a special aptitude for the work and are willing to undertake it should form themselves into a group or association and find ways and means of continuing the work so humbly begun by *Indiana* and improve upon it? Or shall we lag behind other countries still? As an old worker, I am prepared to offer my whole-hearted service to this enterprise.

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SARDAR K. M. PANIKKAR :

Friends.—

I should like to wind up this discussion by offering one or two remarks. One thing which has always struck me as very significant in Europe is that whenever any important work is published in any one of the major languages of Europe—and I include among major languages even Norwegian—you find that immediately it finds a response in every country in Europe. You may not have a major writer producing a book in France without its criticism, without its value, being made known to the people of England, the people of Germany, or the people of Italy and Sweden. It is true that this is due to a very large extent to a large number of people in every country knowing the languages of other countries, and also to there being a quantum of critical opinion, a continuity of thought and uniformity of feeling, all over Europe. That background of thought exists all over India as well. Then why is it that a book produced in Tamil or in Marathi, however valuable or important it may be, does not find its immediate response in Hindi or in Urdu? Except for Rabindranath Tagore and to some extent Muhammad Iqbal, no great writer in one language has had a major influence in any other, and the influence of Tagore was due in some measure to the translation of his works into English. I trust I am not wrong in saying that in most languages Tagore's influence was exercised by the translations that he himself or his admirers produced in English. And naturally, any criticism of Tagore which appears in the Indian languages—I cannot speak of the languages of North India, but only of the South—is based only on the translations that have appeared in English. Is this position satisfactory? Is it not necessary that in order that we may have this interplay and circulation of thought, this mutual criticism and mutual influence by the creative work in the different languages, at least the top men, the men who are in a position to influence our views, must know what is happening in other languages?

Translations are no doubt most important, and I am myself an advocate of suitable translations of classics from

every Indian language into every other Indian language. But what is even more important is that a considerable number of intellectual people in every part of India must know some at least of the major languages, and it is only in that way that it is possible to create a feeling of interplay, to carry and to convey the message of another language into our own languages. Therefore the point that has been made, namely, that in our universities the study of the local language should be insisted upon, that there should be schools of Indian languages where people with interest will be in a position to take up those studies and carry them on, is a good point, which I endorse. Further, there should be translations, by all means into English, but for the rest not through English; in other words, translations should be direct translations from the original by people who are in a position to understand the life and feeling of the province from which the language is translated. This is most important. Why I say that translations through English have a weakness is because it is possible that certain phrases will lose their meaning if translated from an intermediate English version. Let me give an illustration. I remember having come across the word *prapancha-leela* in one of Tagore's poems. The word may be rendered into English as "play of the universe" or something equally foolish, while *prapancha-leela* taken over as such into Malayalam conveys the same meaning as in the original. Therefore a translation from one Indian language into another by people who know both can convey alike the atmosphere and the actual literary form, while translation through the English is a matter which I would not very seriously welcome. For all these reasons, to my mind it appears that we can have the desired interplay and circulation of thought only if each group of people learns genuinely to appreciate the work done in a humanistic way by neighbouring or other provinces all over India.

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MADAME SOPHIA WADIA :

We had a most interesting and stimulating discussion. Only to one point I should like to draw your attention

*Triveni*, a magazine edited at great cost as a labour of love by our fellow member Mr. Ramakotiswara Rau, has for long years tried to advance the common mutual knowledge of Indian languages and literatures; and those of you who are not familiar with *Triveni*, now edited as a quarterly journal from Bangalore, would do well to acquaint yourselves at the first opportunity with that excellent Indian journal. This discussion is now closed.

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

MADAME SOPHIA WADIA .

It is the duty of the Chair to make the necessary announcements from time to time. So, before going to the next item of our programme, we shall take a few minutes with these announcements

The first is that a certain number of extra copies of the current October issue of *The Indian P.E.N.*, the small organ of the P.E.N. All-India Centre, were printed this month because of this Conference. Naturally all those of you who are fellow members, as well as those of you who have worked so hard on the Jaipur Reception Committee to make this conference such a success, have already received copies of the October issue. The extra ones are here on the table this morning, and those of you who are really interested can come forward at an opportune time, probably during the intermission, and receive a complimentary copy of the current number of *The Indian P.E.N.*

I have also to make an announcement about the exhibition of French books. Some of you already saw those books yesterday, which were so movingly introduced to this conference. The books are behind the platform, being exhibited today also. One request they are not to be touched! You will have noticed that the lady looking after that beautiful collection is handling them with white gloves. As we are not provided with gloves, hands off, please, and look only through your eyes.

I have been asked to announce some changes in the morning's programme, since we have to adjust our programme

as we proceed with our deliberations. In nature we cannot always anticipate the future, but in conferences we can! All the three addresses announced for this morning's session will take place and we shall also continue the symposium where we left off yesterday. Since, however, Mr. K. M. Munshi, our fellow member, who needs no introduction to any one here, who was to have given an address on "The Position of Indian Languages in World Culture," has been unable to make the journey to Jaipur, in lieu of his address we propose to call for an item originally assigned for the afternoon session, namely the address on "The Urdu Writer of Our Times" by Professor A. S. Bokhari of Delhi. And we shall have also, since Mr. Munshi's address was to have been a half-hour one, time to call upon a fellow member and dear brother, a most talented writer, one of our really eminent men of letters in India, Masti Venkatesa Iyengar, who will speak to us on "A Vernacularist's Confession of Faith."

One more thing. We are internationally minded as you have seen already, although we are also essentially Indian, and to be Indian in the real sense means and implies being international. Mr. Ould has just handed over a very important letter which I have not read but only glanced over—but we shall share it together. It is a letter from the Royal India Society\* in London, dated the 25th September, and it concerns us all although it is addressed to our International Secretary.

"We are most grateful to you for offering to take advantage of your visit to the All-India Writers' Conference to bring to the notice of the India P.E.N. Centre the desire of the Royal India Society to get in touch with modern writers. Our Society exists, as you know, for the sole purpose of making known and interpreting to the British public Indian art and letters. We do not confine our attention by any means to the classical culture of India, but desire to maintain contact with the modern side of this culture. We believe that in attaining this object the All-India P.E.N. Club will be willing to assist us. We therefore ask you to convey our greet-

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\* Address 3, Victoria Street, London, S W 1

ing to the Conference with the hope that we may in due course learn more from its members of modern Indian literature. In this connection, it would be of much value to me if you could obtain spare copies of the papers presented at the Symposium.

The Editor of the Society's magazine would welcome suitable contributions, and if during your visit you are able to obtain suggestions regarding the translation of works written in an Indian language, but otherwise suitable for the Society's use, it would be most helpful. Again, thank you for your help.

I am, Yours sincerely,

G. WILKS. \* "

I now call my valuer and appreciator of that aspect of beauty which we all recognize as true beauty, a fellow member, Mr. N. C. Mehta, eminently qualified to address us on the subject of "Aesthetic Values in Literature."

### ADDRESS ON "AESTHETIC VALUES IN LITERATURE"

MR. NARAYAN C. MEHTA.

Madam President, Ladies and Gentlemen:—

I do not propose to talk of the amazing variety of literary expression, or even the urgency of it felt by man, even when he was unaware of the art of writing. In a country such as India one only has to remember that the life of the orthodox Brahman begins with the recitation of the *Gāyatri*—one of the oldest of the Vedic hymns. What is important for my theme is the nature of the urge and the validity of its expression, which not only inspired the composition of these prayers at an early epoch of our civilization but, so far as one can foresee, will continue to do so indefinitely. In these early compositions there is a note of austerity, imperious urgency and unmistakable intensity, which more perhaps in the Upanishads than in the earlier writings express the soul of the people. Beauti-

\* The letter is signed by Sir Gilbert Wiles, K.C.I.E., C.S.I., Vice-Chairman of the Royal India Society Council.



ful diction is doubtless one of the principal ingredients of all literature, but elegant writing as such often palls and even fails in its purpose, unless the core of it is inspired and lit up by something true and vital, emerging out of the throbbing and creative consciousness. This is particularly true of languages such as Sanskrit and its vernaculars, which for centuries have so perfected a technique of musical expression and elegant writing that they have ceased even to be noticed or treated as of any but ephemeral value. Few languages in the world, including French, Spanish and Italian, could compare with the Braja dialect of Hindi at its best in the sheer magic of words. Even a comparatively modern Bengali writer such as Michael Madhusudan Dutt, the author of *Meghanāda vadha*, wields a mastery of language, which has rarely been equalled in any literature whatsoever. The writing is characterized by not only a supreme capacity for the appropriate choice of words adequate to every occasion, but a spontaneous exuberance of verbal imagery. This is, however, not to say that writing such as this is of equal significance either as literature or as an adequate reflection of the inner mind of the people. As a matter of fact, it is remarkable what marked dichotomy there is even between what is conventionally called literature and what is classified as devotional poetry. The distinction is not merely formal. It goes to the very root of the many-sidedness of Life itself. For instance, the utterances of the Upanishads are not in the same class with the polished verses of Kālidāsa or Bhavabhūti; nor are the rhapsodies of Mirābai or of the medieval singers whether from the North or from the South, or the imperious and clamant verses of Kabir in the same category as the sophisticated compositions of writers who write for a specialized audience, conscious of their dominion over every artifice of composition. Life is lived at a varying pitch of intensity, though the amplitude of its oscillations generally follows a regular pattern. Despite all this there are moments of crisis when Life swings like the sea itself, between extremes of exaltation and despondency. The mind despite its almost unlimited sweep of imagination feels itself hopelessly circumscribed by the elemental facts of nature. While conventional literature is absorbed in and deals with the inexhaustible

variations and complexities of life and its environment, the mystic mind dives somewhat deeper, and strives to salvage some fundamental values which transcend the sphere of normal literary or æsthetic activity. Sensuous and colourful expression ceases to be of primal significance, it is relevant only in so far as it furnishes the medium for expressing some fundamental truth felt and grasped by human consciousness.

The result is sometimes unexpected and amazing. Just like some ancient piece of sculpture or medieval icon or painting, ideas and words, colour and beauty, are so inextricably fused as to present but a perfect Unity; and this is achieved not as a result of intellectual perception or accomplishment, but is born of an experience felt in all its elemental purity. Literary expression is spontaneously matched to something which is living and profound, because literature at its highest must ultimately be the mirror of the soul itself. Truth is vital to it, irrespective of the form in which it is cast, or the medium that is adopted for recalling or interpreting the innumerable nuances of life. Given this integrity, the result is bound to be significant exactly in the proportion in which insight, imagination and experience are integrated into a symphony at once true and beautiful. Mere talent or verbal facility is hardly noticed, for adequate expression follows almost as a natural result of the inner conviction. It is almost as inevitable and as vital as the music of Bach, Mozart or Beethoven, or in our own country the devotional music of medieval singers. It is curious that this latter tradition took the West by storm when the genius of Rabindranath was first discovered. It was not the originality of his poetry, nor the many-sidedness of his genius, but the authentic character of his songs, which captured the mind and the imagination of the people. The evolution of Rabindranath's genius is worth studying. The first stages followed a normal pattern. Life was seen and interpreted through a powerful imagination and an extraordinary capacity for sensuous expression and a fine perception for the tone and colour of words. The mood, however, changed at a later stage, as also the medium of expression. For the first time India discovered in the genius of Tagore a synthesis of power, imagination and perception such as has rarely been equalled any-

where in the world. The poet's feeling for life had deepened, layers of the subconscious self were touched which were no longer susceptible of verbal interpretation. The writing of poetry was frequently interrupted, and the interruption took the shape of apparently meaningless scrolls. These latter took the shape of some of the most curious patterns of graphic art known to history. The poet was a magnificent calligraphist, and it was his calligraphy left to roam by itself which projected a series of graphic forms and images. It looked as if the consciousness was tapped at a level which had not been probed before. A galaxy of forms was produced, remarkable for their dynamic quality and haunting power, but anonymous and indescribable. The frontiers between literature and painting had, as it were, merged into a common territory, almost similar to the feeling one has in listening to some great music. Silence is indeed sometimes more profound than speech, and it is for this that the Chinese writers on art had remarked long ago as to the significance of empty space. It is astonishing how completely and absolutely great art discards mere embellishment. Perhaps for this very reason the monochrome pottery and porcelains of the T'ang and the Sung periods, and the great masterpieces of Chinese painting are so impressive and significant. Beauty is inherent in Truth, but Truth is elusive and difficult to seize simply because the human mind is but a 'dealer in possibilities' and has not got the omniscience of an infinite Consciousness.

The mind has to seize the possibilities of the infinite, not as results or variations of forms of a latent Truth, but as constructions or creations, figments of its own boundless imagination. Is it because of this that the Indian texts enjoined the craftsman to purify himself in body and in mind before taking to the task of making an image of the Divinity? For the aim was nothing less than breathing the divine spark into inert and formless matter. The modern mind has no use for this ancient recipe, for it prefers to rely upon its own matchless powers of thought and imagination. And yet in the last analysis the whole world of our æsthetic experiences must be based upon certain values which cannot be dissociated from the moving stream of life. Indian writers on Rhetoric grappled for centuries with the problem of what

constituted beauty or poetry; whether beautiful writing as such was more important than adequate expression of human emotions. The result was, as was to be expected, largely negative, for literary experiences like Life itself cannot be cast in rigid or mutually exclusive moulds, for literature is but an amalgam of varying ingredients which go to flavour life itself. There is room for every hue and shade, for every kind of tone and emphasis in the wonderful fabric of literary art, woven on the loom of imagination to the accompaniment of inner music. The fundamental values must, however, relate to the well-being and spiritual enrichment of human existence. It is true that poetic energy must concern itself with every phase of life, but that energy can only be changed into radiant light if it is properly directed. This direction must be found by every artist-himself according to the measure of his own spiritual enlightenment. It can, however, be found in a spirit of humility, for though it is there, the approach to it presupposes enormous preparation and, above all, complete surrender. In India scholars have for centuries thought over the question of what constituted beauty and the proper relationship that should exist between the writer and the critic, for the vision of beauty was only vouchsafed to those who were born with the faculty of perceiving it. It was a gift from heaven, though it could be developed and refined with experience. It is, of course, true that this æsthetic quality or the urge to æsthetic understanding must be there before the mind begins to occupy itself with the infinite moods of literary expression. It is not necessary to correlate ethical values with great literature, for there is no doubt that there is such a thing as absolute beauty and joy in the sheer manifestation of the capacity for receiving and reflecting the stimuli of light and colour—whether from the world of nature or from Life itself. And yet it is vital that literary creation, in order to reach its legitimate peaks, must emerge out of the luminous consciousness of infinite power and potentiality. The modern mind will not accept the dictum of Ashwaghosh, the celebrated Buddhist poet, who in concluding the life of the Enlightened One said that the poem was composed more in the spirit of compounding a bitter medicine with honey, so that the patient might imbibe it more

easily, that his ambition in writing the poem was to bring men, otherwise lost in worldly pursuits, to the path of righteousness. In other words, literature was but mere embellishment of words which was necessary for the delectation of the crowd. Some 2,000 years after Ashwaghosh, Tolstoy repeated a similar doctrine, and identified æsthetic beauty with ethical values. But both Ashwaghosh and Tolstoy were infinitely greater as artists than as doctrinaires of moral values. Art is like a river leaping over a diverse terrain and moving with varying tempo during its long and ceaseless journey to reality. Its justification as well as fulfilment is in its freedom and unhampered movement, regardless of time and conditions, to its ultimate destiny. Freedom is of the essence, as is the purity of the vision. Like Love, literature is a dedication and then only is it harmonised with life.

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MADAME SOPHIA WADIA

We have had a real treat, as you will all agree, and we are about to have another one. Sarojini Devi has already greeted on behalf of all of us Mr. E. M. Forster, but once again we shall take this opportunity of telling him as also Mr. Hermon Ould, our International Secretary, how really glad and grateful we are that they undertook the long journey to India, though covered in a short time, in order to participate in this Jaipur Conference. Most of you know of him, and therefore know him in a real sense, through his book *A Passage to India*. He is to address us on "Literature Between Two Wars," which all of us are eager to hear about so as to learn of the important trends in literature, the mirror of the consciousness of the people in that short interval between two wars.

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### ADDRESS ON "LITERATURE BETWEEN TWO WARS" \*

MR E. M. FORSTER

Friends:—

It is a great joy to me to be in India today, and also a great surprise. I have been shut up in my own island for

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\* Only the introductory remarks are printed here. The address itself has come out as a pamphlet in England.

the long time of six years, and I do not think I could ever have got out but for the efforts of the Indian P.E.N. I cannot thank them too warmly, particularly Madame Sophia Wadia, for their help. It is just owing to you, to this Indian section of the P.E.N., that I have been able to come, and I would also, as I have now an opportunity of speaking, like to thank you in Jaipur for all your hospitality and kindness. I shall never forget it. Also, I would like to say to the students of the Maharaja's College how very sorry I am that my engagements have not permitted me to go round and see them. I should very much enjoy doing that.

Well, I came to India to listen and to learn, not to speak. But I have been asked to deliver a short address on the subject of Prose in my country between the two wars, and perhaps what I say may be helpful in illuminating what has happened to Prose over here in India....

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**MADAME SOPHIA WADIA**

We are all most indebted to Mr. E. M. Forster for his very instructive and illuminating sketch of the prose produced during that long week-end, a week-end which reflected, as he so well put it, not only the events of the two wars, but what the two wars signified in that wider and deeper movement of inner revolution, a world-wide revolution, which has been taking place and is therefore affecting the economic structure as well as the social structure and the psychology of the people in all lands. We are rather inclined to agree with Mr. Forster that we need not be discouraged about the achievements of the writers and the intellectuals during this long week-end, and that it is essentially the forces of what we call in our Hindu terminology *Kama*, *Krodha* and *Lobha* that have driven humanity to the *impasse* in which it finds itself. It is for us in India and elsewhere, for all those who stand primarily for human values and for friendship to do our utmost to contribute to the elimination of those forces of ambition, anger and passion and greed, and thereby make this world a better one for all of us to live in and in which to breathe the friendly atmosphere of the reality of our brotherhood.



its scope by a variety of factors, such as place, community, creed, political philosophy, language and literature.

But as Truth, which is "covered with a golden disc," is unveiled more and more to man, his loyalty is widened correspondingly in its aspiration as well as in its ambit.

Next to loyalty to one's home is loyalty to the language which one has learnt at his mother's feet. They are part and parcel of his personality.

But as one's personality evolves, consequent on an enlargement of his contacts and his consciousness, he finds himself confronted, one after another, with graded choices, between retaining his old affiliation and allegiance and his inner urge towards an acceptance of, and obedience to, his fresh vision of truth. And this causes transitional pains and conflict which sometimes, indeed, take very long to resolve.

As in life, however, so in the matter of loyalty as well, there are three stages of thesis, of antithesis and of synthesis. Likewise, literature too, being an expression of life, has to pass through this triangle of truth; namely, of "is," "is not," and of both "is" and "is not."

It is, therefore, quite understandable that a creative artist should, for many years, in the beginning, be influenced in his work by the spirit of submission to his many-aspected environment. A writer, for instance, feels honestly that his creation ought to be a reflection of what he knows at first hand and that, often, is the life around him. His ideology and idiom, as a result, are local. It may be also that the community of which he is a member demands this of him. This is the stage of thesis.

But sooner or later his genius compels him to try newer modes of self-expression, for such is the nature of the creative impulse in man that, unless it ever moves onward in its search for fuller and yet fuller manifestation of beauty or truth, it is bound to be crushed under the dead-weight of custom and *clichés*. So his angle of vision or his vantage-ground changes continually and with it also the object of his loyalty. Then creeps in the stage of antithesis when the old loyalties become a dream and lose not a little of their dynamism.



Let us take a concrete case. A writer in one of the languages of the North does his own work for years with his vision limited to the fashions of thought and of style within the frontiers of his province. One day somehow he feels dissatisfied in the divine way—that is, he is restless in his aspiration to find something dæmonically different on which to exercise his mind, *métier* and mettle. And thus gives rise in his heart to a so-called clash of loyalties.

But what actually happens is that his loyalty to the language and literature with which he grew up usually remains, only his ideological apparatus is renovated, entailing a change either by way of emphasis or of expression in his avenue of approach to the subject or subjects in which he is vitally interested. Thus there is no conflict, as such. That is why he can be, and generally is, at the same time loyal both to his language and literature, as these have been moulded through the years, and to the language and literature of the supra-province and supra-people,—the Nation.

So far as India is concerned, however, there being a multiplicity of languages and literatures, he is at sea with regard to the exact character of the new object of his loyalty; and so he hesitates to give his heart to it. He is lost in the maze of variety. Nevertheless, he can thread his way through it with the lamp of his own compact, original, initial, intellectual, emotional and expressional loyalty. For the bed-rock reality in both his provincial and national literatures is the same, namely, a passion for, and pursuit of, the Integral, the Eternal,—that rainbow of many colours. The difference brought about in his inner consciousness is dynamic, without doubt, for his mental background is enlarged. His view-point is vitalized by his growing contact with the larger world, outside his own language and literature. There is thus no conflict, but co-ordination, no rivalry, but interplay.

Further, as literature always aims at gleaming the universal as against the accidental, it is but proper that a literary artist, in the course of his work, should gradually go on preferring the former, as he can visualise it, to the latter. And, as he does so, he discovers that plank by plank he is building a bridge between his linguistic loyalty and national loyalty.

In the modern age, man has innumerable opportunities for contacting the larger world,—thanks to some of the gracious (as contradistinguished from devilish) gadgets of science, like the radio, the cinema and the printing-press. For him to-day, his own *venue* of worship, vision or work is but a lane in the universe, which has been abridged to the proportions of a parish. Consequently, it has become comparatively easier for him to transcend his patriotism of the parish and cultivate the all-surveying scope and sympathy of the sky. But if he likes to dwell in his parish, day in and day out, he can do so only at great peril to himself and society.

To sum up the argument.—The modern author or artist can no longer be allowed to live like the frog in the well,—unless he obstinately closes his eyes like the ostrich with its head in the sand. He has to take his seat in the centre of the world's highway. For both his love and his loyalty, as his literature, are nowadays being endlessly impinged upon by the barrier-breaking Spirit, even of science, if you so choose to characterize the present-day converging of cosmic forces on his consciousness, concepts, character and conduct.

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After the intermission, the Conference assembled again at 11.45 a.m.

Madame Sophia Wadia called upon Mr Masti Venkatesa Iyengar to give his extempore address.

### ADDRESS ON "A VERNACULARIST'S CONFESSION OF FAITH"

MASTI VENKATESA IYENGAR.

Madam President, Ladies and Gentlemen —

I had not intended to take any part in the programme of addresses and speeches in this Conference but some fear about the effect that the development of the various vernaculars might have in disrupting the population of this country and various remarks that were made with reference to that fear suggested to me the desirability of saying a few words

from the point of view of the worker in these vernaculars. You no doubt have noticed that most of the speakers so far have been eminent persons who have employed English largely as the medium of expression. They are celebrated, they are known to the world, we know they are great and entitled to speak for our population. But what exactly has this poor worker in the vernacular for whom they are speaking to say for himself? So I thought that I might crave the permission of those in authority for a few minutes to present the case of the writers in the languages of this country.

The question was put: will the development of the various vernaculars have the effect of creating disruption? And our great and respected leader Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru definitely answered and said, it need not. The development of the languages need not cause disruption. The languages in India are not the cause of division among the people. Quite the contrary. The gracious lady who is President of our club, and President of our Sammelan, our Conference, at the very outset of the proceedings gave in a beautiful figure the reason for the inevitable unity of thought and feeling in the country, that no doubt languages are different, but though the mouths are different, the heart is one, that the heart is one and the thought is one and, although the languages might differ, the thought which is expressed in the languages has to be the same. That was reassuring. But Mr. Gulabdas Broker remarked this morning, for instance, that when the great work of a great writer in Gujarati was put into another language and taken from publisher to publisher it was not accepted; and the suggestion was that there was prejudice against a sister language. Was it because the thing came from Gujarat that the Bengali publisher was not willing to publish it or had he some less mysterious reason? That he feared that the book might not sell, that he might not have found the paper in these ration days? Twenty other reasons are possible but the suspicion is there and the fear is there.

I, as one of the writers that work in the various languages of this country, wish to say that so far as the unity of the country is concerned, so far as the love of mankind is concerned, so far as the love of all the universe is concerned, we have no smaller, no less noble, an ideal than any

with a vastness and a variety that belong to a continent and retaining at the same time the essential oneness that belongs only to a country. In God's world then this area is an entity. Why with our small minds shall we measure this great creation and say that because we do not see elsewhere the variety of languages that we have got here, therefore this country cannot be a country, and must be a continent? If it is a continent, it is also a country. It is both a continent and a

country and we have been one people and one country and we shall again live as one.

Elsewhere in small areas you have got a language like Welsh. I cannot read Welsh. I doubt if anybody can read Welsh. It seems such an un-readable conglomeration of consonantal symbols and yet Lloyd George and his brotherhood could hold festivals and have delightful days in hearing Welsh. This in England, which is a patch compared to India. If they can have two languages there why can't we have sixteen here? What is wrong with the sixteen languages? Can we not be one with these sixteen languages?

We have been one; we can be one. And if we wish that all these languages should be developed each to the fullest height of its stature, we are only demanding that India shall be made as strong as she can be in every limb. If I say that I shall take exercise so as to become strong in every one of my limbs, nobody will suggest to me: "You are making your hand strong; it will go and hit your head." Yes, if I am a lunatic; and in that case it will hit my head even if it is weak. But if I am not a lunatic and am sound and in my senses? I ought to take exercise, because we ought to strengthen our limbs. If India goes mad let us think of seeing how she should least injure herself but, when she is sane, giving strength to the various limbs is the only way of making her strong. I say again, by analogy, by example by history, we know that a country can be united in spite of many languages. There is no hope for us except through strengthening the vernaculars, building up our literatures making the people think the highest thought of the world, and nothing less than the highest thought. Nothing shall we say to the world that is less than the highest we are capable of thinking. That is our aspiration, that is our desire, that is our belief and it is in that conviction that the worker in the vernaculars is going on.

Supposing for a moment it is a very stupid supposition that we do not do this, what is the course left to us? Will any one kindly tell me if there is any alternative? Unity is endangered if the languages are strengthened. therefore, what shall we do? Not strengthen the languages but weaken them? But the people will have to speak some

language, what language will they speak? Will they speak in their own language or will they speak in another language? As far as emotional expression is concerned in what language will they express themselves, when they are beaten, for example, except in that which they learn from their mothers and from the children all around them? What is the language in which India will speak except the languages that she has inherited and built up for thousands of years? What is the language in which I can speak except the language to which I was born, and which I have cultivated? I am now speaking in English, it is true, but, my friends, so much energy has gone into this English of mine and so little is the result that I am ashamed of it. I am sure we people do not know what horrible English we speak. I am certain that friends from abroad will be able to tell us that this English sounds most queer in their ears. If we do not know this, it is time we learned it from them. We spend 20 years, 25 years and 30 years upon English, taking medals, being first, becoming big men and drawing large salaries, and therefore we all come to think that our English is very beautiful, so beautiful that at times we are ashamed of talking in our mother tongue. But that is a sad mistake. I speak my mother tongue at my worst better than I speak English at my best. I make fewer mistakes talking my mother tongue sleepily than I make in English when I am most cautious, avoiding errors. And why? In the very nature of things I can feel easy only with the language into which I was born, in which I was brought up and which to me is the means of thought. I cannot think but in the language which is my mother tongue and if I do not do the literary work for my people and express their soul in that language in which other language could I do it?

A fantastic proposal was once made that as our mother tongues would divide us we should have English as our mother tongue, that in order to do this we should import a large number of young Englishwomen with a sense of mission to teach English to this country, that we should have Rs. 20 crores as a national trust for this purpose. I read all this prospectus and said "You might find the 20 crores of rupees and people mad enough to study English under the Englishwomen, but how can you find the thousands of Eng-

lishwomen with a sense of mission ? Can England send us that number ? And if they came and taught us English and made English our mother tongue, we might be a united people, and one nation, and bring up a new culture, but what would we do with the culture of our people built during the past three thousand years ?

Now, as our respected leader said, English has greatly influenced the development of our vernaculars. In spite of studied moderation he said that Sanskrit and Persian throttled the vernaculars. I am afraid English is doing this just now. I know that the best of our men, the very best, have produced in English work that is the pride of even English people. I know that the gracious lady, our President, has done it. I know that our respected leader, Pundit Nehru, has written prose that is ranked among the highest in English literature. But I know that they are very exceptional. To the mother tongue we must return if we want to live effectively. English, as I said, has throttled us. Perhaps one of the finest ways of illustrating that from my point of view would be this, for instance. I have written in Kannada for 35 years now. Friends say I have been doing fairly good work. Madam President of the present session spoke in language which must seem definitely exaggerated with reference to me. Now in spite of 35 years of hard work, I must say that the big men in my part of the country do not know what I have written. A fair number know that I have written, but what I have written they do not know. A much smaller number have touched the books, practically no one has read them. They are safe, but I am a loser; and by their example the country is a loser, and if this happens all over the country ? Just fancy, such poor beings as we are, we do our best and are not used by our countrymen. How are we going to live and rise as a nation ?

The thing I wished particularly to say was that, far from disrupting this country, we are trying to build up this country. We not only do not do harm, we really do good, and if we are contradicted by any querulous person we are likely to become querulous and retort "Only we do good and no one else does." That would be a stupid claim to make, for the vernaculars by themselves cannot now do the many

things required. English is wanted ; possibly other languages are wanted ; and in the days to come we shall have to get in touch with the rest of the world. Though today you may require more English there is room in the country for all the languages of the world. But when the languages come let them be additions to our languages and not become substitutes, masters trying to drive the indigenous languages out.

The day before yesterday, returning to my camp, I walked into a wrong tent. I saw a gentleman there who was the rightful occupant. Imagining that the tent was mine and that he was the servant I asked "*Kya hai ?*" ( I do not know much Hindi ) and that poor gentleman, he was very courteous, looked at me. He showed that I had made a mistake. I then looked at the tent, looked around and saw that my coat was not there and my other things were not there and I discovered that I was in the wrong tent and then I said " I am sorry " and came out. Now what English has done is to walk into the tent of the vernaculars of this country. It has made the mistake in very good faith. But it has walked into the wrong tent and we courteous people are looking at it and trying to indicate : " This place is not yours ; you have no place here ; in any case if you stay here you cannot get your clothing and other things " And I think English will do well to realise that the tent belongs to the languages of the country and then stay as a welcome stranger, as a welcome friend, I say a welcome brother, and not try to become master and drive out these languages from their own tent.

Just one word more. We have the symphony of India to build and we have to build it for the world and not for India only and all these languages must be at their very best, at their most correct, most effective and most beautiful, in order to make that symphony perfect and effective in God's world and creation. Each note has to be the most perfect that it can be. Every note has its place in a symphony. As in the matching of colours of a morning or evening, as in any bit of beautiful creation in God's world elsewhere, there is a series of beautiful things all put together, made into one whole. Our languages have to make, in the course of the few years to come if possible, the few centuries to come if necessary, but they have to make that one harmonious whole, the



symphony of modern thought to come from India.

Here is a number of voices and each of these voices has to be made good. Not one of them in God's mercy shall be quenched, shall be extinguished. Nobody shall say: this is superfluous. Nobody shall say: this is unnecessary. Together they will swell the harmony that we desire to raise in praise of God (or no God, as you like). But whether God or no God, the thing is there and the languages are there. God speaks in all of them and it is he that speaks and no one else. It is the One Life that speaks and nothing else. That Life, that God, has a thousand faces, a thousand eyes, a thousand limbs and a thousand of everything, even uncountable myriads of faces and limbs and voices. To all of them let us raise our hands in salutation.

*"Navasīnu anamāya sahasra murdhaya,  
Sahasra padābhīni śhīreṇa bahare,  
Sahasra narine puruṣāya sastratīṇe,  
Sahasra bīṇi yuga āharinī nartakā."*

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After Mr. Masti Venkatesa Iyengar's address Madame Sophia Wadia called upon Prof. A. S. Bokhari to read his paper on "The Urdu Writer of Our Times."

### ADDRESS ON "THE URDU WRITER OF OUR TIMES"

PROF. A. S. BOKHARI:

Madam President, Ladies and Gentlemen:—

During the few minutes at my disposal I would not be so rash as to attempt a detailed account of the Urdu writer of our times. What I hope to do, however, is to describe one or two features of the cultural situation in which he is placed. I do so with the feeling that the literary climate in which he lives and breathes is, at least in some measure, the same for writers in other Indian languages also.

When Iqbal joined his ancestors in "the undiscover'd country" eight years ago, a number of friends, from centuries far and near, gathered round him. Ghalib and Mir were

here, and Hali and Shibli and Ghalib, and also Naziri, Iqbal and Hafiz—and the conversation flowed freely. There were a few awkward moments, of course. The learned discussion on the Self, with Rumi, every now and then soared above the heads of the rest, and during Iqbal's monologue on the Destiny of Nations, Ghalib, alas, was heard to snore. But, on the whole, things were remarkably easy. There was much reading aloud, from books or from memory, of well-known passages, and wit and wisdom were happily intermingled through the timeless days and nights. There were many controversies and not all of them were resolved. But even the deadlocks discovered new and exhilarating patterns of understanding. Iqbal was not of the Ancients, and yet to the Ancients he did not appear as a stranger, only as something rich and strange.

How would a young Urdu writer of today fare in this company, were he to be hastened upon the journey before his time? He would, I am sure, be received with courtesy and with affection but he would also, I fear, feel somewhat lost. Communication with the Ancients would not be easy. The new arrival would find a great gulf between him and his predecessors and would plan long visits to the Elysian library to bridge it. For, the circumstances of his life here had made it difficult for him to inherit his due share from his forefathers. There are, no doubt, exceptions. Raashid and Faiz, Firaq and Farhatullah Beg, Josh and Hafiz—all these are on good terms with yesterday, although all of them in varying degrees have thrown in their lot with today or tomorrow. But they seem to be a dwindling minority, the best of their race which will be reborn one does not know when. For the majority of our writers of today, the links with tradition are quietly snapping. Maulvi Nazir Ahmad, the novelist of fifty years ago, quoted the Prophets with reverence and the Poets with distaste, his villain quoted the Prophets with distaste and the Poets with relish. But both author and villain could quote. Both had inherited a common body of literature which was clearly inventoried in the mind of the age. The Urdu novelist of today would share with his hero only the inability to quote. He is a voracious reader but Spring Lists, Autumn Lists and Overseas Editions

follow each other in such quick succession that there is no time to sort out or to read twice. The curriculum of our times is confused. Least of all is there the urge to look back. To the Urdu author of our times belongs the future, perhaps; but not the past.

The causes which contribute to this dissociation are varied and complex. As a first analysis, one may entertain the idea that the system of education under which the author was brought up did not give him a fair deal. During the last fifty years or so, formal education has veered away from the old ideal of urbanity and/or piety which sought to equip the student for this world and/or the world hereafter with the help of the Poets and the Prophets in the proportion required. But the old certitudes have disappeared, along with their Prophets and their Poets. That is the one thing that the change in our educational system has definitely achieved. For the rest, our education, these many years, has been a series of experiments or rather gropings for a new ideal which should suitably replace the old. And the groping still goes on.

This, however, would not be the whole truth. The ultimate reasons lie deeper and could perhaps be traced to the rapid and vast expansion of the world in which the author, along with the rest of his generation, now finds himself. For, this half century has seen a rapid melting away of frontiers and crumbling away of dykes and breakwaters. Traditional values were useful as long as the community which they sustained and stabilised preserved its contours. The contours are now fluid and unstable and are spreading out as the contours of oil spread out on the surface of the water. To the old community he can now no longer belong, for the old community is gone. Instead, he finds himself in a new and expanding community, to which he must one day belong if he is not to be adrift for ever. The new community is not yet defined in his mind. He does not fully comprehend it, but he has already found out that the previous generation did not fit him for it. Many things from the past stand in the way of achieving a satisfying life in the new world; and so, away with the past! The great urge of his generation therefore is to rebel—rebel against custom, against author-

ity, against police, against parents, to turn away from the Prophets and the Poets. In fact, turn away from everything that is reminiscent of the umbilical cord. The battle is sometimes a little confused, the points of the compass occasionally get mixed up. But, then, all battles are like that.

For the Urdu writer, the break with the past has involved at least one great sacrifice,—it has at one stroke deprived him of a vast collection of words and allusions, of myth and symbol which provide the writer-craftsman with his subtlest and most useful weapons. For, words are not mere noises or scribbles which if lost can be easily replaced. They embody the psychological observations and emotional experiences of those who have gone before us. Each of them is a line discovered in the spectrum of human experience. If a line of the spectrum is lost, we cannot just draw another instead. We have to discover it all over again. The author of today has, therefore, not only to find new names for new things, he has also set himself the task of identifying and naming things that have been known and felt before. By this renunciation he has imposed on his creative self a strain which has increased the difficulties of his craft enormously. This perhaps explains why we sometimes find him at once acute and crude, direct and involved, inarticulate with many things on the tip of his tongue. Words that he betrayed are now betraying him. Denison Ross, knowing that living language embodied a national store of quotation and allusion which every educated individual acquired and from which he drew to lend colour and emphasis to spoken and written word, tried to sketch the background of the English language in a book published six years ago. In it, under the heading, "Literary Quotations," he included the Authorised Version, Shakespeare, Nursery Rhymes, under "English Tradition," Popular Titles of Famous Personages, Festivals, Famous Advertisements. And there was a section on "Stock Phrases." How easy would it have been, fifty years ago, to describe the physiognomy of Urdu along these lines! How difficult today!

This is not the Urdu writer's only difficulty. There is also his bilingualism, and what a formidable handicap that can be when the two languages are so widely different from

each other as English and Urdu ! Scholars and educationists will explain to us with many unanswerable arguments from history and experience, what a great boon it is for any one to know two languages. Internationalists will point out how every foreign language acquired is twice bless'd, blessing the country that gives and the country that receives. And no doubt they would be right. For, every new language is another window in the mind, and perish all that fears the light ! For the majority of mankind this would have no painful after-effects, but the writer, alas, has to do more than have a mind like a well-lit room. He has to communicate. What is more, he has to communicate in only one language at a time. Now, whatever the number of languages that have fed his mind, he has only one mind. One window is green, the other red, but in the mind the two colours do not lie snugly side by side, each distinguishable from the other. They mingle and form a third colour which is perhaps a little more green near this window and a little more red near the other, but which is after all neither green nor red anywhere. He could revel in this mysterious and subtle light and feel the richer for it, but how difficult to pour it back through a filter which is only green or only red, and yet not falsify the colour. In a sense it would be true to say that a bilingualist can never speak his mind unless he speak in the two languages at once—a phenomenon which we frequently experience when two bilingualists come into intimate contact with each other. But confine him to one language and you force him to give you, not half a mind—that would be an impossibility—but a mind that is only half articulate and constantly out of tune with expression. And yet that is exactly what the Urdu writer of today has to do. In the texture of his writing, you will see curious twists and turns, obscurities and frustrations, and worst of all, curious English phrases so thinly or clumsily clad in Urdu that only the bilingualist will understand them. Language here ceases to be a subtle weapon, dexterously handled by the craftsman. It becomes a series of approximations, a gesture code. Words do not carry their meaning within them. The meaning lies outside of them and the words point to it from a distance with a thick finger. If he feels unbearably thwarted, he stops

being an Urdu writer and in despair takes to English instead. But whether he substitutes the red filter for the green or the green for the red, the problem remains.

We noted earlier that our writer found himself in a new community today—a sprawling community yet undefined—but bigger and more complex than any his predecessors had known, to which, for dear life's sake, he must needs adjust himself to achieve fullness and stability. We should not be surprised therefore, while the adjustment is yet incomplete, to find him seized with the restless energy of the lonesome person determined to find congenial company or make it. It is a symptom of this desperation perhaps, that the writers of today are ever ready to try any associations or affiliations that promise to dispel their loneliness and to keep on writing prefaces and forewords to each other's books. Seldom before did our writers manifest such a strong tendency to hold each other's hand, to form Societies, Anjumans, Sabhas and Circles, as earnest and almost fanatical essays in community-building. In terms of creative energy, a writer has to pay a heavy price for such explorations and wanderings, but our writer seems to have resigned himself to this. His aim, though dimly perceived, is the achievement of a full life; and, being dispossessed, he must do a great deal of house-hunting first. But while he is house-hunting, the business of living itself has to be frequently postponed. He is a young root in search of a soil, but how keep the vital juice circulating till the soil is found?

In a speech delivered at the 17th International Congress of the P.E.N. Club, Arthur Koestler told us how Turgenev could write only with his feet in a bucket of hot water under his desk, facing the open window of his room. The hot-water bucket, Koestler said, stood for inspiration, the creative source; the open window for the world outside, the raw material for the artist's creation. He pointed out that the strongest temptation which the world outside exerted on the author was to draw the curtains and close the shutters. But there was also a temptation No. 2, in which the action of the open window was experienced not as pressure but as suction. The writer was tempted not to close the shutters but to lean right out of the window, taking his feet out of the hot-water

bucket.

So great is the need of our Urdu writer for comprehending the events in the street, in other words for vision and focus, that we should be prepared to find him too frequently at the window and, fascinated by the spectacle outside, even shouting and declaiming and not returning to the desk for days and letting the hot water grow cold. But a new world has burst upon him. There are so many things to watch and understand, so much raw material to sort out. It would be somewhat exacting, therefore, to expect great works of art from him, to expect that he will not frequently be tempted to join the crowd in the street rather than keep his feet in the hot water. But as the main contribution of his generation to the fellow-craftsmen that will come after him, he will give you seriousness of purpose and the courage to look ahead and journey into the future—if possible with the blessing of his forebears, if necessary, without. He is keen, aware, restless and desperate—determined to find the new path and travel on it, indifferent to what he may drop on the way. We cannot pay him greater homage than to understand his difficulties and limitations, his pains and penalties, in order the better to appreciate his struggles and achievements. This is what I have here attempted to do

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( Here the Morning Session ended )

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## Afternoon Session : 2-30 p. m.

The afternoon session commenced at 2-30 p.m., with Madame Sophia Wadia in the Chair. The first hour was devoted to the papers or speeches on the modern Sindhi, Tamil and Telugu literatures.

### MADAME SOPHIA WADIA

We are really sorry we have had to rush through the last part of our programme. Though we feel hungry for more information about every one of these living dynamic literatures of ours, we cannot unfortunately have now discussions, remarks, or questions on these literatures, since we have very little time at our disposal. What we have had, however, has been most stimulating, and so we need not feel disappointed since, after all, we have been able to complete the symposium of talks on sixteen Indian literatures.

I should like to read a cable message which was brought by our International P E N. Secretary this afternoon from an English brother and friend, Edward Thompson. He is known to many, perhaps to most of you, and he is a good friend of India. He cables to us, addressing his cable to Mr. Hermon Ould : " Please give Conference my affectionate wishes for its success. "

Before the few minutes that we shall allow ourselves for an intermission, I wish to call upon one of our poets, Mr. Hafiz, who will sing for us a most appropriate song, after which we can go and relax for a few minutes before returning for our closing session.

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### MR. HAFIZ :

Excuse me, please, if I do not speak English fluently. I know Hindustani, and I write in it ; and I shall therefore sing for you, members of the P.E.N., a song of " Love and Unity Between Us " in Hindustani,



## پریت کا گیت

مَن مَدِو میں پریت بسالے      او وُورکھ او بھولے بجالے  
 دِل کی دلیا کرلے روشن      انسے گھر میں جوت جگالے  
 پریت ہے تیری ریت ترائی      بھول گیا او بھارت والے  
 بھول گیا او بھارت والے  
 پریت ہے تیری ریت  
 بسالے  
 انسے مَن میں پریت

کرودہ کیٹ کا اُترا ڈیرا      چھایا چاروں گُونٹ اندھیرا  
 شیخ برہمن دونوں رھوں      ایک سے بڑھکر ایک لٹیرا  
 طاہر داروں کی سنگت میں      کوئی نہیں ہے سنگی تیرا  
 کوئی نہیں ہے سنگی تیرا  
 مَن ہے تیرا میت  
 بسالے  
 انسے مَن میں پریت

بھارت ماتا ہے دکھیاری      دکھیارے ہیں سب ترائی  
 تُوھی اُٹھالے سندر ہرلی      تُوھی بں جا سام ترائی  
 تُو جاگے تو دبا جاگے      جاگ اٹھیں سب تریم بھاری  
 جاگ اٹھیں سب تریم بھاری  
 گائب تیرے گیت  
 بسالے  
 انسے مَن میں پریت

نفرتِ اک آزار ہے ہمارے      دکھ کا دار و بار ہے ہمارے  
 آہِ اصلی روپ میں آجا      توہی پریم آوتار ہے ہمارے  
 یہ ہارا تو سب کچھ ہارا      من کے ہارے ہار ہے ہمارے  
 من کے ہارے ہار ہے ہمارے  
 من کے جبتے جیب  
 نسالے  
 اپنے من میں لریں

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دیکھ لڑوں کی ریب نہ جائے      سر جائے پر مہب نہ جائے  
 میں ڈرتا ہوں کوئی تیری      جیتی نازی جیب نہ جائے  
 ہو کر نا ہو حلدی کر لے      تھوڑا وقت ہے بہب نہ جائے  
 تھوڑا وقت ہے بہب نہ جائے  
 وقت نہ جائے بہت  
 نسالے  
 اپنے من میں لریں

اوالنسر حفظ جالندھری

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After an intermission of fifteen minutes, the Conference reassembled at 4-30 p. m.

### VOTE OF THANKS

DR MD SHAHIDULLAH :

Madam President, Sir Mirza Ismail, Ladies and Gentlemen —

A Sanskrit poet has said that in this world of poisonons dreams there are two efficacious friends—the taste for good literature and the association with the good—and we are very thankful to Madame Wadia for this intellectual treat that we have had during these three days. We are accustomed to making pilgrimages to sacred places, and I think that there can be nothing more sacred than this where all nationalities, all races, all religions, are assembled in this worship of 'Vani Nirmaya' or the incorporate Goddess of

**Learning** We Indians do not know each other, which is very lamentable. We know Englishmen much better than our brothers and sisters in our neighbouring provinces. I call myself an educated man, but unfortunately I know very little of the life and literature of the country not far from my home town, say Orissa or some other part of India. The first thing we need is this we should know ourselves, and the P. E. N. has now given us the means of knowing each other. During these three days we had a symposium of critical surveys of the various modern Indian literatures, cultivated in different parts of India, and by this means we have been able to know each other more intimately than before. We can know each other only by knowing the literature in the different parts of India. Our India is really a subcontinent, and there was no means before of knowing each other, and we are therefore really thankful to the Founder of the P.E. N. Centre, Madame Wadia, for providing us with the means of knowing each other.

It seems to me that for each vernacular there should be a small publication bureau. Take, for example, Bengali. Of course, I am not giving this charge to the P. E. N., because its resources are scanty, but being a Bengali writer myself I can publish the 100 best Bengali poems in the original side by side with their English translation. I can likewise publish the 100 best short stories in Bengali or the 100 best essays in Bengali, with their respective English translations. And if our friends, coming from different parts of India, representing different regional languages, will do the same, then it will advance the cause of mutual understanding. We need it. We need to know each other. The question is not whether we Indians constitute one nation. We should anyhow know each other, and the best way to know each other is to know each other's literature, because literature is the reflection of the life and thought of the people. In the very fitness of things we find the great poetess, Mrs Sarojini Naidu, as our President, and Pandit Nehru as our Vice-President. I believe that literature does not flourish unless there is national emancipation, and though we are a non-political body, our faith is also linked up with the politics of our country. Latin literature flourished best

when Rome had supreme power. I believe that Indian literature too will flourish with its full vigour when we have a free India. That we have two eminent politicians amongst us, though we are a non-political body, is quite a sign of hope and encouragement.

It is really a great pleasure for us to be at Jaipur, the Jaipur which paved the way for Hindu-Muslim unity during the Mughal period. We are here under the shadow of royal patronage, and really I am thankful that we have a rich royal hospitality, for, as the Arabic saying goes, people who are not thankful to man are not thankful to God! So I propose, as a member of the P.E.N. and as a delegate to the Conference, a hearty vote of thanks to the Jaipur Reception Committee.

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MR. KISHANSINGH CHAVDA :

Friends —

We writers are well known for our curious moods and strange behaviour, and it is not an easy thing to please and satisfy this lot. Sir Mirza Ismail, however, not merely as Prime Minister of Jaipur but as a polished gentleman, has succeeded in pleasing and satisfying this community of strange creatures, and has shown a spirit of equality, cordiality and courtesy towards all the guests. Delegates who are staying at the Palace or at the Prime Minister's residence or in the tents at the Park House have all enjoyed the same comforts, in the same style, and there has been no difference in the attitude of our hosts towards us. This sense of equality is the first of our achievements.

The second thing that has been achieved is the contact between the writers of different provinces. We have not merely cleared away many misunderstandings between us, but we have come to a better understanding about each other and about each other's literature. And the third and by far the most important and significant achievement which we have to our credit is that, while we have known hitherto Britishers as rulers and exploiters, during this conference our British friends, who have come over the seven seas, have come not as rulers or exploiters, they have not come here to try to

persuade us that Indian culture is not good, but have come rather to greet us, bringing with them the good-will and the comradeship of the British P. E. N. Club and the British people generally. The most significant and important event in the history of modern Indian culture is the fact of Britishers' coming here as messengers of the good-will of the British people. This should be considered as one of the most historic events in our modern cultural life.

Friends, it is not an easy thing to provide for 200 guests with different tastes. But Sir Mirza has achieved this feat. His original promise was to house the International P E N Congress at Mysore. It could not take place, because of the war; but anyhow Sir Mirza has realized his dream on a small scale at Jaipur, and I hope and trust that he will realize that other dream also in the near future. I want to tell Sir Mirza Ismail, as both Prime Minister and individual, of our sense of gratitude to him on this occasion. We are all satisfied and happy, and we shall certainly carry away happy memories of Jaipur, and please believe me, Sir, when I say that the energy, money and time which you have spent will not be a waste, but will rather be an investment.

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MR HERMON OULD

Madam President —

I venture to interrupt the proceedings of this afternoon's session to put in a word on behalf of the British delegates. I am sure I am speaking for Mr Forster also when I say that we are quite overwhelmed by the generosity, not only of the State of Jaipur, but of the P E N members of the Indian Centre, who have greeted us with so much hospitality, and if I may be sentimental, so much affection. I think, ladies and gentlemen, that this is an extremely important event in the history of the P E N. It is, I think, the very first regional conference that has ever taken place within the framework of the P E N, and I am also sure it will serve as an example for many others to follow. We have heard a very few words on the subject of the sixteen different Indian literatures, and during my few weeks in India I have discovered that there

are Centres of the P.E.N. all over India. I am hoping to visit a few of them. And now it seems to me that the Indian P.E.N. has an extraordinary opportunity here,—it has an extraordinary opportunity of uniting all these different bodies of culture, not only under their own flag, but allowing them to express their own individuality in their own way in their own centres. It seems to me that here in India we have an example for the world, which I hope the world will follow.

Just on my own behalf I want to say: "Thank you, Sir Mirza and thank you, Jaipur!", not only for the official way in which he has received us, but for the personal way in which he has been looking after all the details. I know he has taken a personal interest in every moment of this Conference, and I thank him on my own behalf and on behalf of the other British delegate.

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MR. E. M. FORSTER:

I need hardly say how heartily I endorse all that Mr Ould has said about the hospitality of the Jaipur State and the keen personal interest of Sir Mirza Ismail.

The vote of thanks was then carried with acclamation.

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## CONCLUDING PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS\*

MADAME SOPHIA WADIA

My task now is the summing up, a task which is really not mine, but which has fallen upon me at the command of Sarojini Devi. First I must state that I am very happy. Many have been inquiring whether we who worked to organize this conference have felt that it has been a success. We have. We are all feeling really and doubly happy, and if Mr. Hermon Ould considers this really an event in the history of the International P.E.N., we certainly feel that for India it is epoch-making, that a new chapter in the work of the P.E.N. All-India Centre has opened with this All-India Writers' Conference at Jaipur.

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\* Delivered extempore.

When we said that we were meeting at Jaipur, the inevitable question from all P E N. Members, writers who are not P E N members, those interested in literature and those who may be potential writers but have not yet become writers *de facto*, was "Why Jaipur"? And our answer was a very straightforward and direct answer, which all of you who have been here with us will fully understand without any commentary. the answer was, "Sir Mirza." "Why Jaipur"?—because Sir Mirza was here, and he had for many years shown his real interest and genuine sympathy with the labours of our very small organization

Before I say a few words about the dreams that have made the P E N in India possible, I shall thank on my own behalf, on behalf of the P E N All-India Centre and on behalf of all of you, Jaipur State, His Highness the Maharaja and all the members of the Reception Committee beginning with its Chairman, Professor Rollo, especially emphasizing our deepest thanks and gratitude to Shri Iswara Dutt, who has laboured to make us all so comfortable and has attended to every detail. We are thankful also to the volunteers who have made the access to this hall comfortable, who have carried our bags when the need arose, and who in every way have shown their courtesy and their spirit of service. And it is that spirit of service which underlies the work of all P.E N centres and the work of our own All-India Centre.

Sarojini Devi has suggested that I should in a few words let you know this afternoon, at this closing session of a successful three-day Conference, something as to the origin and the founding of the P E N All-India Centre in the year 1933, for which I happened to be instrumental—but only instrumental!—All of us as human beings are instruments or channels, and the original suggestion—I am glad that Hermon Ould is right here with us by my side to enable me to give him due credit—the original suggestion came from him, then as now our International Secretary. He had always wished, of course, in the ardour of his devotion to the ideals for which the P E N stands, that there should be a centre for India. There were then four Indian members of the London P.E N. Centre, who are now naturally our members. These four members were the late Rabindranath Tagore, who be-

came our first National President, Sarojini Devi who has succeeded him, Rai Bahadur R. B. Saksena who is here with us, and Sardar K. M. Panikkar, who is also with us and who was instrumental in interesting the British Council in our Conference and thus making the trip of Messrs. Forster and Ould possible. These four members were there. Hermon Ould had approached several people to see if a real centre could not be formed for India. He realized the importance of giving India her rightful place in an international association of writers, a cultural association of men and women of all lands and all races, united by their common idea of culture and of comradeship and friendship. It was he who approached me and asked me whether I would undertake the responsibility of founding and organizing a centre in India. At once feeling in sympathy with the cause of 'the P.E.N. International, I felt and foresaw the great possibilities for India and the world if a centre was established for our Motherland. I saw several people, consulted several people including Sarojini Devi, and in 1933, with the blessings of Gurudev, our Rabindranath Tagore, the centre was launched very quietly, very silently, a small seed sown with disinterested devotion for the cause of unity, for the cause of brotherhood, and for the cause of culture, which is ever one and indivisible. Ever since then, the Indian Centre of the International P.E.N. has been labouring to promote the unification of India through a better knowledge and understanding of all our Indian literatures. The same ideal which the P.E.N. has in view for the world at large has been ours for this cradle of all civilization, Mother India. Soon after the establishment of this India Centre, we started a small bulletin called *The Indian P.E.N.*, and month after month, regularly and punctually, this journal has gone out trying to disseminate valuable information on the various literary activities of our men and women of letters.

I do not wish to keep you very long, although there is a great deal to say naturally about the struggles, the difficulties, the problems as well as the achievements and the successes of the All-India Centre of the P.E.N. This Conference at Jaipur will have turned even our most pessimistic members into optimists. Conditions were difficult, and year after year



we had tried to put forth the idea of an All-India Conference to our Executive Committee. But because of the sufferings that had been ours during all these years of the war—we may not have been touched directly as our friends in London were touched, but we too have suffered, not only because we have shared the suffering of the world, but because in India also we have had privations and struggles which we need not mention, which we all know, culminating in the major and dramatic catastrophe in Bengal and in Malabar—year after year our Executive Committee naturally demurred and took up the position “Better not risk it,—how shall we carry it through in these conditions!” Our friend Panikkar, now a friend of all of you as well, revived this time the idea of an All-India Conference. And, as it was foreseen that the war as such could not last very much longer, we decided to try to organize a Conference. Again let me reiterate the fact that because Sir Mirza was here, it was possible at once to settle the venue of the Conference. All we had to do was to write to him about our plans and to ask him whether we might come, and a most cordial and immediate reply was received saying, “Welcome”!

And so here we came, and certainly this Conference has shown in a most tangible manner, as a scientific demonstration if you please, what the P E N stands for, what it has tried to achieve, and what work lies before it in the future. We have come from all parts of India, drawn by our common aspirations, drawn by the desire to meet one another, to hear one another's views without fanaticism and without dogmatism, under the free banner of true culture. We have different ways of looking at things, but to hear another's point of view is to deepen our vision and to enrich our own consciousness with the understanding of the hearts of men. How are we to understand men and women, unless we meet them, unless we have an opportunity to hear them and they have an opportunity to hear us, unless we become their friends and they become our friends? If a personal reference may be allowed at this juncture, I can say for myself that the labours on behalf of our All-India Centre of the P E N have always been amply rewarded, for through this centre I have made such a number of true friends, find-

ing affinity with many in the most distant corners of our India. I have friends whom I have not met, but they are friends nevertheless. We correspond through the "PEN," the very symbol of our profession as writers. We correspond, and we come to know each other, and here at Jaipur we have met not only friends known to us before; we have met also some of those unknown friends who have become friends because of the similarity in our aims and ideals.

And what are we to do after this rich, this truly wonderful experience of our Jaipur Conference? We have to work harder than ever, we have to plan for the extension of the work of our centre. We are therefore expecting, and we know we shall get it, greater and wider co-operation, more prompt response and co-operation from all those who feel for the cause of culture in the world, for the unification of India through the dissemination of free understanding and knowledge of her many and varied literatures. We feel that there has been no note of dissension, no discord, no conflict between the members of the P.E.N.; its free platform and idealism have really reconciled all differences and brought together all points of view. Some seemed to feel that we should not look too much to the past and others seemed to feel, in their turn, that the younger generation should not separate itself from the past to the extent it claims to have done today. Could it in reality? The past and the future, whether we know it or not, whether we realize it or not, are present here in each one of us, and it is in the present that there is that unification of the past and future. If we but give our attention to the present, with the very best that we are and that we have, we need not worry. If some of us keep the vision of the glorious past, see the splendid visions which were those of Aryavarta, we need not worry that some of the younger and more impatient writers and creative artists keep their vision focussed on the future, the future about which we all dream, to which we all wish to contribute, to which it is the responsibility of each one of us to contribute the very best that he can. It is a common task in which every one is needed, in which no one is superfluous, however humble or however small his merit or his talent. If his heart is pure and his motive disinterested, he can be a builder of that future temple, the temple—if we do



wondered what would sum up the message of our dreams in the past, of our realization in the present, and of our aspirations for the future, and I remembered that I had brought with me a quotation by our great poet Tagore, and that quotation I would like to read to you. It is essentially the expression, not only of the ideal of the P E N., but of the ideal of all men and women of good-will throughout the world. We need not despair of our future, the future of humanity, even though we are passing through a dismal period. The darkest hour is the one before the dawn. Let us remember the glorious pages in the history of humanity and make them the basis of our hope and our faith and our trust in the future of humanity, in the regeneration of this beloved Mother India. Tagore said.

“The age has come when all artificial barriers are breaking down. Only that will survive which is basically consonant with the good of all men. We must prepare the field for the co-operation of all the cultures of the world, where all will give and take from others. This is the key-note of the coming age.”

Co-operation, recognition of the oneness of life, of the solidarity and independence of the human family. Leaving aside for a moment the word “international” and turning here towards our difficulties and our own problems, some of us, most of us, feel that the day we stand for the higher values, the day we fulfil the expression of the soul of our India, that day we shall have the key to the solution of all our problems, political as well as economic.

Here a word will not be inopportune with reference to another antithesis, another contrast, which is also false, which is also emphasized in an exaggerated manner, bringing it into an inaccurate and disproportionate position: the idealist vs. the realist. These are not really conflicting attitudes: they complement and supplement each other. There is no great endeavour which has not been first visualized by the dreamer, planned by the architect, designed by the designer, and then only actually built by the labour of the many, by many men engaged to bring it into tangibility, to make it descend from the realm of dreams into the world of concrete reality. We are all human. That is our essential nature, and what we want is to rise to the dignity of that manhood. As men

we walk. And we walk sometimes looking up at the sky. Can we walk only looking at the ground? In the normal position, we can see the stones and the pitfalls on the way as our feet tread the ground, and yet we need not always keep our eyes on the track, on the stones and the pebbles, since all our problems are not there on the ground. As human beings we can lift our heads too and look, look up at the sky, catch a glimpse of that free atmosphere where all differences pale, where all prejudices vanish, where thoughts which are petty and small in the nature of every one of us give place to the real and the free.

Sir Mirza had warned me that he would have to go,—still I want to mention him. What he is doing for Jaipur we should do for our minds. When he has seen a beautiful building obstructed by other buildings or by an overgrowth of trees and plants, what has he done? He has just cleared the way, so that we might have a true perspective to admire the architecture of that building. It means a certain amount of destruction, but it is destruction which is constructive. Just as he has cleared away the débris and shown the beauty that is there, so also beauty is in the consciousness of every one of us, but it is covered over, and we want it uncovered. And if we, old or young, whether so-called idealists or realists, if we have at heart the good of all men, if we make the keystone of our life this message of Gurudev whose memory was so beautifully invoked at the opening session by Sarojini Devi, then, friends, we can go ahead joyfully in this hour which belongs to us.

I shall merely read in conclusion that Upanishadic poem which indicates the aspirations of all of us, which indicates the goal which India had reached in the past, which her sons and daughters, whether born on her soil or adopted, must enable her to fulfil. But because India remains the mother of all of us, so that Mother India must speak, not only for herself, but for the whole world. Her soul has been slumbering, but the soul is ever there, the soul is ever alive, the soul is ever young, for it belongs to the realm of the true, of the permanent, of the real, and it is for us to reawaken the soul in one way or in another, whatever is our true way—and none can dictate what should be the way of another—and

that is why we should be lovers of freedom, tolerant, having sympathy, understanding, compassion, synthesizing all points of view in the larger, in the wider ideal of our common humanity. And so let us rejoice that we have met at Jaipur, that we are taking away from this Conference something precious, that we must now utilize what we have received, that we must give more and give better service to our Motherland

“Lead me from falsehood to truth,  
Lead me from darkness to light,  
Lead me from death to immortality,  
*Om Shantih Shantih Shantih*”

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**PART IV**

**PAPERS SUBMITTED TO  
THE ALL-INDIA WRITERS' CONFERENCE, JAIPUR**





## THE INDISPENSABILITY OF ENGLISH TO INDIAN CULTURE

BY SIR BOMANJI WADIA

Man seeks the instrument of " language " in various contexts and for various purposes.

Firstly, man needs a medium of intercourse for everyday life. He needs a " language " that is simple, natural and direct. It is a language which is colloquial, plain-spoken and effective. One needs a language which is simple and natural to talk to one's kith and kin at home, to visitors, and to servants.

Secondly, there are times when man has a strong desire for self-expression through the medium of " language. " He is moved profoundly by something or other and wishes to express his thoughts and feelings, and needs language which strikes a deeper chord. Man does not live by bread alone, nor does he talk in the market-place all the time. He has a heart that beats in response to the movements of life around him, and he needs an instrument to keep a record of these heart-throbs, at least for his own edification, if not for that of others. A work-a-day language is here unsuitable. There are heights which it cannot scale and depths that it cannot fathom. A more potent and fascinating instrument is needed to achieve this task.

Thirdly, man, civilized man, seeks in " language " a master-key to knowledge. Thousands of years have elapsed since man emerged from the forest and started on the long pilgrimage of culture. He has met with partial successes and also repeated set-backs on the journey. He has sought a clue to the mysterious workings of Nature, he has again and again sought to invade the Invisible, he has evolved the various sciences, and, labouring to recapitulate his life on this planet, he has written out the scroll of human history in innumerable volumes. Today the knowledge he has received is a huge mass, and it never decreases in size. There are thousands of workers in the different parts of the civilized

world who scorn delights and pursue knowledge for its own sake. The more man knows, the more he realizes how much more there is yet to know. - Veils upon veils cover the face of Truth. He tears them asunder, and still there are hidden veils within, tantalizing the seeker after knowledge. This adventure is even like the "experience" which Tennyson has described as "an arch wherethrough gleams that untravell'd world whose margin fades for ever and for ever when I move." Knowledge is indeed limitless, and life is short. The language needed for its expression is not the colloquial language of the house and the market-place, nor yet the loftier language of emotion, but a highly specialized language that must have a ready word for every concept, for every shade of meaning, and for every passing idea.

Fourthly, and lastly, modern man has to think not merely in terms of his diminutive home-land but of the whole world. Wendell Willkie covered the globe in the course of a few weeks, and came to the conclusion that the East and the West, the Old World and the New, all constituted "One World." Before our eyes a brave New World is rising on the ashes of the warring old world. The conquest of the air has abolished national frontiers for all practical purposes. The Radio has brought the whole world to our drawing-rooms. The Atom Bomb ominously tells us that either we translate the ideology of "One World" into a confederation of the peoples of the World, or the nations must perish one by one. If man is to be a citizen of the world, does he not need language for international intercourse? We have the duty of striving to understand others and the duty of making others understand us, and language is the only easy link between men.

It will be interesting to study the average Indian's, and especially the cultured Indian's, reaction to language in these various contexts.

For our daily purposes we must use as a matter of course our respective mother-tongues. There are many spoken languages in India, and some of them are only spoken languages with us yet, having neither a script nor a literary inheritance, but for the daily intercourse of life one's mother-tongue is the best.

For artistic self-expression also one's mother-tongue should be used, but there are many men and women in our midst who find themselves more at home in the English language. This is not due to any unnaturalness, but rather to early training and environment. It is almost inevitable that they should seek self-expression in English. They have not only wooed the muse in that language, but have also cultivated with great success "the other harmony" of English prose. Their recorded achievement in the English medium is hardly less distinguished than the work of those who have written in their regional languages. And since much of the nationalist literature of our troubled times is written in English, that language is already a constituent of our culture, and the cultured Indian of the future will perforce study it reverently and strive to keep it alive.

We desire further that the India of tomorrow should be a "modern" nation, fully conversant with all the vast and complicated systems of knowledge and even in a measure making her own contribution to its enrichment. Ancient India was veritably in the vanguard of human civilization. Our remote forefathers perfected many arts and practical sciences, scaled the dizzy heights of philosophical speculation, and bequeathed to posterity intricate systems of government, codes of ethics, and the sciences of medicine and engineering. Then the dark days descended, and the soul of India was obscured for a time. When we awoke from our stupor, we found that we had been overtaken by the West. Macaulay's recommendation to Lord William Bentinck to make English the medium of instruction in the Indian schools and colleges made it possible for Indians to familiarize themselves with the literatures and sciences of the West. At the same time Orientalists, both European and Indian, sought to unlock the sunless treasuries of traditional Indian culture, and various publications in English issued from the press in England and in India. Whether therefore we wish to study Indian history or philosophy, Indian social or political institutions, Indian languages or literatures, we realize at once that without a knowledge of English many of the sources of information will simply not be open to us. Although some of the modern Indian languages are desperately trying to abridge

this serious gap, it will take years before they become self-sufficient in this respect.

It can therefore be truly said that the English language has been on a literary embassy round the world. The literature of England is among the most important and creative themes which that country offers for consideration abroad, alike within English-speaking communities and outside their boundaries. Many striking results could be catalogued in exposition of the happiness which the language and its literature have given, and among all our modern studies the one which can almost be called universal is the study of the English language and something of its literature. However much Indian sentiment may rebel against this state of affairs, there seems to be at present no other way out. If we are seeking a key to modern knowledge, it is necessary to learn one major European language to be abreast of the march of knowledge and culture. And however much we may criticize the causes that imposed English on India, it occupies today a dominant position in our educational system and has become a sort of second mother-tongue to our cultured men and women. It serves to keep the educated Indian in touch with the progressive forces of the world.

The accident that English is also the language spoken in America confers on it greater importance, and makes it the world language of today and tomorrow. International gatherings in the future, as largely as in the recent past, will be conducted in English. Trade also bids fair to woo English as a channel of communication. As far as we can look into the future, it appears certain that the vogue for English will increase rather than diminish. And the educated Indian can thus hope to keep his finger on the cultural pulse of the outside world only through this medium. Let India by all means develop her own regional literatures, but let her also with the help of the English language continue to participate in the co-operative adventure of humanity's advancing culture.

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## CONDITIONS OF FREEDOM IN LITERATURE

BY D. V. GUNDAPPA

## WHY FREEDOM ?

To secure to the writer the freedom necessary for the full and faithful performance of his duty to the public has always been, I believe, one of the primary objects of the P. E. N. organization. The *Indian P. E. N.* journal had the following in its issue for March, 1937:

" The P. E. N., as the greatest international alliance of writers, must be alert to detect and fearless to denounce attempted encroachments upon freedom of thought "

A book (or pamphlet or article in a journal) is the embodied form of a thought as well as its instrument; and its value to the public is in proportion to the sincerity with which that thought has been conceived, verified and expressed. The freedom that the writer is entitled to is the freedom thus to be sincere—in stating, discussing and illustrating a thought or an idea or an item of knowledge,—the freedom to give fair and adequate utterance to his conscience.

## INDIA'S TRADITION

Thinkers and writers in India, throughout the many centuries of her great literary history, have always prized their freedom for self-expression above all other possessions. Many stories are current among us of poets and philosophers who scorned to seek the patronage of the wealthy and preferred to exile themselves from the capitals of kings rather than place themselves under the embarrassing obligations which accompany royal favours. Of one such, this story is narrated: The sage was living in a hill-cave and was absorbed in the writing of an important treatise. Accounts of his marvellous learning and piety reached the ears of the king and created in him a great longing to visit the holy man and seek his blessings. But what happened when he went inside the cave and stood waiting to catch the sage's eye? The entrance to the cave was narrow and the king's figure stood across it. As the light inside became dim, the sage looked up from his palm-leaf page, the style-point still held there, and asked the visitor: " Who may you be ? "

King : " I am the ruler of this country. "

Sage · " What would you have from me ? "

King : " An opportunity of serving. "

Sage · " Ah ! It will be a service if you would please take your shadow away so as to let me have light enough to resume my work "

It was in such utter fearlessness and disregard of personal gain that the quest of truth and beauty and goodness went on from age to age in India

#### SOURCES OF DANGER

But in the India of today, the purveyor of ideas has all the enemies to contend against that his compeers in other countries have, plus a few peculiar to this country. The State, the Churches, economic interest-groups and ideological groups, social prudery,—these, apart from the private individual's good name, are usually counted the sacred bulls that menace the liberty of the writer in other lands. But in India we have, as nowhere else,—

1st, an all-powerful supreme Government foreign as much in outlook and purpose as in personnel, and wriggling in nervousness as to its safety and advantage and dominance,

2nd, Governments of Provinces and States not amenable to the control of the people and thoroughly persuaded that they can judge what is the best for all and that none else can ;

3rd, nascent political parties, with tenets still inchoate and traditions still to be formed, but not slow to fly at one another's throats and bandy about charges of libel and slander,

4th, religious denominations and castes and communities in any number, each jealous of its own supposed superiority in the social scale and unwilling to let a whisper pass which is likely to bring that superiority into question ;

5th, an enormous mass of social conservatism, ever beckoning us to the past as to a forgotten Golden Age and fanatically suspicious of any move towards modernizing institutions and practices.

Thus it comes about that it is not only the political publicist that has his head stuck in the bridle, but also the

researcher in history, the critic of social institutions and the exponent of any new species of moral or æsthetic values.

And it is not merely when a war is on, or where the safety of the State is involved, that you have to be wary and vigilant and hesitant, but also when peace reigns on earth and where the question is one of making the State's own lot better.

#### SOME INSTANCES

In speaking as I have done, I am prompted by the recollection of certain actual instances of attack made upon a writer for no other reason than that he stated the truth of the matter as his eye was able to see it. Let me cite some cases.—

Not very long ago, the authorities of a University felt obliged to cancel out certain portions of a prescribed text-book,—one portion a famous essay by a great writer of the last century and another a poem by a celebrated writer of a decade ago,—because those passages were alleged to contain references to a prophet which were not to the taste of some among his followers, who had carried on a loud agitation.

In a town in the Bombay Presidency, a furore was raised over a book on Shivaji because it contained some speculation as to the clan or caste of the hero. The writer was subjected to physical violence.

A Department of Public Instruction had to cancel a lesson out of a text-book because in it occurred a caste-name which, though in popular use from time immemorial and found employed in old records, is not acceptable to present-day sentiment. Should a fact of history be obliterated?

A great controversy raged in one part of the country over the terminology employed by a writer on Buddhism, because some Jains fancied in it a slur upon their teachers.

The public burning of Manu's Laws in places in the Madras Presidency is another instance of intolerance of ideas.

The agitation about the *Satyarth Prakash* is a fact of contemporary history.

The trouble about the singing of "*Vande Mataram*" and about the lotus symbol on the escutcheon of a University are also typical.



The instances I have cited are only from one or two parts of India. People from other parts will no doubt be able to recall numerous similar instances.

The above cases, it must be remembered, are not indicative of the spontaneous reactions of the Government; they illustrate the mentality of sections of the public. Such hypersensitive and vociferous sections of the public constitute a menace to the liberty of the writer as much as Governmental authority does.

The suddenness with which communal fanaticism breaks out on the flimsiest of excuses in several parts of the country is a symptom of the prevailing atmosphere. Everybody seems to be in a fit of nerves. Not within India's borders only, but in the international world, too, every group or section seems to be spoiling for a fight. That is not the kind of atmosphere in which freedom of thought and enquiry can thrive. In the recognition of this fact is a warning. The writer must bide his time. Meanwhile, since the pen has the power both to stir and to calm, the wise writer will for the moment attend more to the pacificatory side of his office.

Of the suppression or the curtailment of liberty directly by Governments, so as to render impotent not merely the political journalist and the propagandist of an ideology, but also the patriotic poet and playwright and novelist, cases are so many and so well known that they cannot and need not be specified here.

#### AN IDEA—THE ATOM BOMB

Long before the discovery of the energy hidden in the atom,—as early as in the day of Socrates,—men of intelligence had discovered the far more tremendous energy latent in an idea. A new piece of factual information, a new line of inquiry, a new mode of reasoning, a new attitude towards a problem of existence, a new use found for a familiar thing, a new sentiment in human relationships, a new road opened to some hidden wealth or beauty of life, anything new in the realm of knowledge and thought is an atom-bomb dropped on our hoary and serene dormitories. A new phrase, a new figure of speech, a new sentence structure, a new tone of voice or rhythm of speech, anything new in the technique of

expression may start the hearer or the reader on a new track of emotional or intellectual pilgrimage. It is this power to disturb,—this revolution-potential, so to say,—inherent in thought and word that makes the smug and comfort-loving classes of society so apprehensive and suspicious. Persecution is the grim compliment that the purblind pay to the farsighted in the realm of the mind.

#### THE WRITER'S RESPONSIBILITY

There is another side to the matter. the writer has a responsibility as well. It is indeed so stupendous and taxing a responsibility as should make him feel apologetic about claiming the liberty that should be his. It is an axiom that the writer too is a citizen and a partner in the life of the community. As such he has his burdens to bear for the commonweal. The *raison d'être* for the liberty he claims is that he needs it in order to promote the general good. Power divorced from responsibility is no more tenable in literature than in politics. But while there are fairly definite and recognized methods of calling a Minister of State to account, no such rationally working machinery exists to judge and control the writer. This difference is but natural, for the results of the minister's labour are in the outer world and concrete, and admit of exact standards of measurement, whereas the results of the writer's art belong to the inner world and are intangible and idiosyncratic. The blow that falls on the writer is therefore arbitrary. That it is apt often to be more arbitrary than is unavoidable is the gravamen of his complaint. To mitigate the arbitrariness is to that extent to safeguard freedom.

#### SHOULD IMAGINATION BE ABSOLUTIST ?

Leaving aside for a moment the theory that the liberty sought by the writer is for the service of Truth and Beauty and Goodness, let us consider what themes have, as a matter of fact, been engaging his pen in our time. I have in view particularly the younger writers outside political journalism, more especially the authors of imaginative literature. Their most common subject is the psychology of sex and the clash between convention and free-love. Next is the wickedness of capitalist society and the wrongs suffered by the

proletariat. The third, coming after a long distance, is the glory of some religious or tribal or linguistic or social group.

These subjects are portrayed through the medium of short story or novel or play or of dramatised or fictionised biography. And the charge to which work of this kind is liable is indecency, or excitement of class-hatred, or libel. It is the part played by the writer's imagination that will turn out to be the source of trouble for him. From this arises a question: Is there or is there not an ethic which imagination must accept for itself? Queenlike as its office is among the faculties of man, is imagination to rule as an absolute monarch, or is it to be amenable to constitutional inhibitions?

Here is room for two opposite schools, one holding that imagination should be left unhampered to dive into the depths of life, that it should be free to publish its report unedited, and that to prescribe a law to it would amount to forcing it to render a lesser service than the highest of which it is capable, the other school arguing that imagination is but one among the several messengers sent by the spirit of man to fetch news from the depths of being, that it cannot be regarded as self-sufficient, and that its service becomes finer when taken in conjunction with the other available reports of the true and the good. So there are absolutists, and there are constitutionalists.

I should say at once that I am among those who hold that the liberty which it is proper for a public writer to claim for his pen is not a liberty that would be lawless, but one that would submit itself to rational regulation. The author and the artist are of the same world as the general citizen, and must accept the rule of law like him. Law is, in the literary field as in the civil, the best guarantor of true and wholesome freedom. Only, the law must be an intelligent one and not a mechanical one. It must be one based on insight into the nature of the things to which it is to be applied. And the law may in part be one voluntarily accepted by the writer and in part one imposed by authority from without.

## TWO SUGGESTIONS

I do not know whether an agency or a method that will be infallible and all-sufficient can ever be devised for keeping the writer attentive and faithful to his social responsibility without in that very process interfering with the liberty legitimately due to his vocation. All agencies and instruments must be human in working and therefore apt to be errant or idiosyncratic at times. That is a condition we must all accept as an inevitable attribute of our universal nature. On that understanding, I wish to be permitted to speculate along two lines.

First, I would have the writer look at his own work through independent eyes before publishing it and consider if there are exuberances to be pruned. In this he must seek guidance from friends capable of taking a view at once sympathetic and detached; also from public opinion as moulded by representatives of learning and culture. Self-criticism from other people's point of view is the first law for the writer, and that a self-imposed one.

Second, I would have State authority operate, if it must, only through a form of judicial agency analogous in spirit and character to the jury tribunal. This is to minimize interference under cover of the external law.

## OUR DON QUIXOTES

I recommend voluntary review and revision by the writer himself before publication as a measure of precaution, particularly in cases of the kind in which the complainant is likely to be someone other than the Government. In nine cases of trouble out of ten, it cannot be pretended that the writer was taken unawares. When our literary Don Quixote first discovered his new point to be put to the public, or forged his new argument, or coined his new phrase, he must have smacked his lips in lively anticipation of a broil with some section of the public. It may well be that the cause he has taken up is worth a score of hot broils. But the question is whether that same cause could not be advanced just as well without the broil. Stirring thought is undoubtedly a legitimate object, but not stirring up enmity, which is a totally different thing. A literary missile may as easily over-

shoot the mark as any hasty or random bullet. Opening the mind's eye and not making it go blind with anger and obstinacy is the good writer's purpose. If that be so, why shouldn't the writer adopt what precaution he conscientiously might? Indeed, we have accepted sincerity in the writer as a primary condition of his enjoying liberty, and sincerity involves the duty of (1) inquiring if there is any "other side" to the matter in hand, (2) understanding the rationale and the implications of the "other" side if there be one, and (3) taking scrupulous care to be just to it. In other words, studying and being conscientiously fair to a possible dissentient is part of the duty prescribed by sincerity.

#### SHOCK TACTICS

To judge from some specimens of the kind of writing that has raised storms, a class of writers today seems to have a decided preference for what may be called "shock tactics." To lead a *Blitz* assault upon your heart and capture you while you stand dazed seems to be the technique. To create an unsavoury or lurid situation, to fabricate a dialogue out of gall and wormwood, to make mock of an ununderstood custom or an intricate institution,—this seems to be the favourite method of some writers to secure the reader's conversion. I venture to submit that this "smash and grab" technique cannot succeed if not kept strictly within bounds. Powers of reflection and review are inherent in man's intelligence; and they are not killed by the shock of a moment. The shock passes and they return with the return of normal circumstance. When cool inquiry and reasoning have reasserted themselves, the shock moment could only evoke a smile in retrospect. I should also submit that crudeness is no mark of literature, that the ways of literature are gentle and refined, that it achieves its purpose by patient tact and unobtrusive artistry,—in the manner, say the Sanskrit rhetoricians, "of the beloved one" (*Kantha-sammitha*).

I suggest that it should be possible for a writer so to manipulate his material that major offences against public sentiment will be avoided without any loss of either his artistic or his moral effectiveness. I fancy there are young friends who will construe this suggestion of mine as a mark of

timidity and admonish me saying:—"Look at Shaw, look at Lytton Strachey; look at D. H. Lawrence above all. Are they so faint-hearted?" My reply would be: "Look at them by all means. Yes; look also at Hardy and at Galsworthy. Look at Shakespeare and Sophocles too. And if you won't mind, I pray you will look at Valmiki and Kalidasa besides. Study the secret of the strength of these older masters of our craft. Theirs is the quiet strength of proportion, of harmony, of high sanity. There is a power in economy and balance as there is a power in exaggeration and over-emphasis. The power born of well-kept proportion and sense of synoptic verisimilitude works quietly and lastingly, like medicine that gets into one's blood and bone, while the other kind of power, that of unrestrained vehemence and eccentric fancy, works like a jack-knife inflicting wounds on the surface of one's body, distressing to the onlooker as well as to the sufferer for a day or a week, but forgotten when healed.

#### A WORD OF WARNING

And while I am unreserved in recommending the study of foreign models to our younger writers, I should utter a word or two of warning. First, if our author has a reformist *motif*, let his story or play (when it is not a translation) be one organic with our social *milieu*, and not one transplanted here from an unknown soil. Second, let him not lose sight of the need for independent discrimination when admiring a foreign model. All that is allowed and even admired in Europe need not be presumed to be deserving of imitation in our country. We may as well draw a warning from a foreign thing as copy it. After all, in the field of social ills and remedies, the West too is groping and has no panaceas to offer. We in India have to do our own groping suitably to our environment and our national ethos. This means that there are limits to the admissibility of European archetypes as a justification for the sensational and the shocking in our literary creations.

Pray let me not be understood to be pleading for the jejune and the insipid. Unhesitatingly do I admit the need for rousers and stingers for the torpid conscience of our society. All I ask for is that the medicine be suited to our

humours. I plead that the author who has put any strong drug in his concoction,—pepper or strychnia, rhubarb or myrrh,—should privately consult a taster before putting it on the market. The pungent drug need not be omitted. Only the causticity may not be let go beyond the point of general endurance

#### WHOLESOME INFLUENCES

It is here that friendly consultation may help. If the P E N could do something towards the formation of personal friendships among authors and scholars interested in a common field of work it will have brought into being an influence that is bound to guide writers in the exercise of their liberty so as to avoid occasions for attack upon it. Let me make it clear again and yet again that a writer would do well to seek counsel from friends capable of intellectual detachment and to exercise self-criticism and self-restraint, not for the purpose of softening a shocker into a soap-cake, but to turn a bad shocker into a good one. The difference between the good and the bad among works of art is one rather of finesse in workmanship than of medium or *motif*.

The next salutary influence upon a writer as to the limits fit to be observed in his exercise of freedom is that provided by a body of competent and responsible public opinion formed by means of book-reviews and literary discussions in the periodical press and at centres of enlightenment and culture. It must be admitted that the present state of book-reviewing in our newspapers and journals is, with rare exceptions, not very much in advance of the primitive. Men eminent in the country's public life, professors in colleges, workers in fields of social investigation and social service, connoisseurs in art and culture—all such must lend a hand in the judging of books and the refining of public taste. The classical tradition of the politician and the administrator excursing into the world of letters and scholarship now and then,—the Sastri-Sapru tradition, the Ramaswami Aiyer-Reddy tradition,—can play a big part in raising standards for both writers and readers. It is a pleasure to acknowledge here the good service which a few journals like *The Hindu* of Madras have been rendering in this respect. The monthly bulletin of the Indian P E N, within its limited space, has

been serving as a fine example in responsible reviewing; and it is for all of us to see that it develops into an authoritative source of guidance to those who, even though authors, are modest enough to think that there are still things for them to learn.

### THE JURY MECHANISM

I shall now hurry to say a word about action by the State. Private counsel and public opinion may help a writer to know how to modify any orchidaceous extravagances of his in line or shade, so as to ward off likely assaults by prudes or particularists of denominational, provincial, communal and other varieties. But attacks by the agents of the State or by an individual fancying injury to his good name are in a different category. These are species of action following the rigid processes of law and therefore less amenable to informal or amicable treatment.

For obvious reasons, I must leave aside the field of defamation and libel, and limit my remarks to cases giving rise to direct interference by the Government,—that is, charges of sedition, creating of disaffection between class and class, endangering the public peace and so forth.

Action by the State's agents falls under two heads (1) Cases instituted in courts of law, and (2) those dealt with by the Government's Executive in its own discretion, without reference to law-courts. The initiative under both heads rests in the Executive's hands, and that authority's notions of what constitutes an offence are not always such as could be trusted to stand scrutiny at the hands of lawyers. I have at the very outset made reference to two facts of fundamental significance about the Government of India that it is foreign in both complexion and character and that it is not subject to control by the citizen-body. These circumstances could not but play a part in determining its psychology. This consideration is relevant in ascertaining the motives of the Government in launching action against a writer. Then there are the uncertainties of legal interpretation. There are bound to be also the predilections and the idiosyncrasies of individual judges. Amidst so much to make the writer's liberty precarious, there is, it seems to me, one





must be free to stretch itself out on all sides. Without liberty for the play of the individual's faculties, there can be no current of new ideas issuing into life, no new springs of vital energy, no renovation of life, no progress. On the other hand, without the rule of authority, there can be no order in society, no stability, no integration of the forces of the community; all then is bound to fall into chaos, and that is destruction of life. The task for the reformer in every age is to discover how to eliminate the antithesis between Individuality and Society and between Liberty and Authority, how to reconcile the two pairs to each other and lead up each to find its highest fulfilment and justification in the service of the other.

So I plead for the cultivation of the sense of justice by statesmen and of the sense of balance by writers. Justice and Balance are both names of one and the same principle, the principle, namely, that relations between the parties to a transaction, or between the components of a creation, should be so regulated that each one of them gets what is due to it according to a generally applicable rule. And balance is not necessarily statical, it can be dynamic just as well, and I am all for dynamism. Balance is seen not only when one is at a standstill, but also when one moves forward with steady feet and swinging arms.

When the writer and the Government's agent find themselves in opposition to each other, let neither insist on being a law unto himself, for the country is greater than both and humanity is greater than the country. Let both agree to seek and abide by the arbitrament of that which is greater than themselves. Does this sound like a counsel of perfection? The crux of the matter is in this—that the Government is the stronger of the two parties on the material plane and can afford to dictate terms. When a writer, after making such revision of his work as conscientious self-criticism may suggest, is still faced with a threat by any external power, he will recall the case of Socrates and recognise it as a conflict between moral and material power. He will, if he is worth his salt, remember that his king of kings speaks within himself,—through the vision of the True and the Good revealed to his soul, and that loyalty to that king

should give him the strength to wear a smile on his face while stretching out his hands to be put in chains. It is a historic truth that the chain dared by conscience today is sure to reincarnate tomorrow as the advancing flag of man's freedom to grow into his best.

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## FREEDOM AND CREATIVE IMAGINATION

BY PROF. HUMAYUN KABIR

Thought is by its nature general and seeks to introduce into the variety and flux of experience an element of stability and order. That is precisely the reason why education of the intellect is the least important part in education. Unless the other elements in human nature—instinct, emotions and the will—are also educated simultaneously, mere education of the intellect defeats its purpose. Such education further generalises an aspect of our nature which is intrinsically general and can therefore only emphasise the distinction between this aspect and those other aspects which are fundamentally unique and refuse the easy generalisation of classification under concepts. The result is conflict within the individual of which social conflict is only an effect and magnified reflection.

The stability and order introduced by thought into the flux of experience necessarily brings with it an element of rigidity and permanence. So long as the situation remains relatively constant, this uniformity of conceptual process is an advantage to the organism. It can respond to the situation with almost automatic ease. Thought, instead of being a procrastinating factor which interpolates between desire and action, serves as an instrument of fluent action from which constant repetition has denuded all emotional tinge. Whenever there is a change in the situation, and such changes are continuous through alterations in either the environment or the organism, the uniformity of conceptual response is attended with dangerous possibilities. The changed circumstances demand a changed reaction. This change can be effected only through the imagination which introduces an element of fluidity into the rigid conceptual constructions of the intellect.

Scientific induction would itself be impossible without the play of free imagination. The scope of such imaginative constructions extends to every sphere of life, for life could not continue from moment to moment without its instrumentality. Every moment is characterised by its intrinsic novelty. This challenge can be met only by an imaginative modification of the concepts which we already possess. But each imaginative reconstruction leads to a concept that is new. For concepts are rigid and determinate and therefore the distinction between one concept and another is absolute. Emphasis on conceptual interpretation of the world must therefore lead to a series of discontinuities whose co-operation and conflict are baffling to the intellect. Conceptual rigidity is therefore the breeding ground of revolutions. For the concept a thing is either eternal, or comes into being and will pass out of being at some determinate moment through the agency of some external force. Imagination by its insistence on flexibility and fluidity offers an alternative explanation of creation, not as the sudden emergence of fully developed reality out of nothing, like Minerva out of the head of Jupiter, but as the gradual evolution of a new order of reality out of the elements which existed in comparative disorder even before. In the language of Whitehead, "It is not the beginning of matter in fact but the incoming of a certain type of social order."

Imagination is, however, not merely an instrument of fluidity. It is also an agent of adaptation of the organism to its environment. There is nothing surprising in this. For the modifications which imagination introduces into the rigidity of the concept enables us to face the changed environment with greater hope of success in meeting its challenge. Uniformity of reaction is useful so long as the environment remains stable. But since the environment cannot remain constant, such uniformity can help survival only where the reaction is so generalised that it is indifferent to the specific characteristic of a particular stimulus. In organisms of a low order, this is often the case. For the constituents of such an organism are not specialised and any element in its constitution may serve any of the purposes of the organism. Thus if a worm or a jelly-fish is cut in two,



The moment it is realised that the problems of the modern world centre round the individual, the importance of imagination becomes evident. All philosophers agree that the individual is in a special sense the province of the imagination. Philosophers agree that imagination expresses itself in art. Reason cannot express the individual, for the essence of rationality is its universality and necessity, while the individual is what he is, not on account of the features he shares with other individuals, but on account of those which are his unique possession. Imagination penetrates into this uniqueness and achieves for it æsthetic universality. A study of æsthetic universality and the function of the imagination may therefore be expected to throw light on the relation of the individual to his social milieu.

This, however, is not all. For art is also the expression of emotions and instincts, and in fact the only expression that mankind has till now achieved. An intellectual judgment expresses little of the excitement and energy with which our instincts are charged, but what are left unexpressed in such judgments do not therefore cease to be. Deprived of the light of consciousness, they are submerged in what is aptly called the unconscious and, from behind the scenes, influence our conduct more than we know or care to admit. "The history of the world at large and of any individual within it proves that nothing but unhappiness results from an indiscriminate or complete suppression of instinctive emotions. On the other hand, let it be freely admitted that the only comparable unhappiness comes from the uncontrolled and undisciplined display of these same emotions."

The function of art is the expression of the individual. Expression marks the passage from the unconscious to the conscious and that is why expression is simultaneously communication. In the case of the emotions of the individual, we communicate them in expressing them, but since no emotion can be communicated except through actual experience, self-expression is, in such cases, self-socialisation. What was originally the emotion of the artist alone becomes, through expression and communication, the emotion of all these who share his experience. Expressed emotions are social emotions and, one might add, civilised emotions. To express means to

liberate from the immediacy of the occasion in which experience occurs. The casual and the accidental are squeezed out. The causal and the rigid are liquefied and loosened. Freedom is therefore the condition precedent for all creative imagination.

## POWER WITHOUT RESPONSIBILITY

By DR. C. NARAYANA MENON

An unhealthy tendency has been developing of late in popular European literature. A study of the articles that appeared between 1908 and 1914 in the newspapers of England, France and Germany reveals a progressive tendency to foment hatred between classes, races and nations. Why did editors use the resources of rhetoric to rouse the passions of the mob? Was it merely to push the sales of their papers, or was there the secret hand of the politician? Whatever it was, press-propaganda paved the way for the war, which in turn intensified the propaganda. Post-war idealism among writers checked the evil for a time; but the men at the helm of affairs were untouched by idealism and their realistic policies led to the slump which enveloped the world. Economic distress revived the literature of mutual suspicion and hatred with redoubled fury, and the global war followed. Many writers joined the chorus of the hymn of hate; and, though the war is now over, the hatred continues to spread. During my recent tour of India I was pained to find the country being flooded with the literature of mutual intolerance and hatred. Writers constitute the salt of the earth; and it appears as if the salt is losing its savour.

We must realise the dignity of the pen. The pen is not merely an instrument to enlist more swords: it has its own method of bringing about justice without the help of the sword. That is why it is mightier than the sword.

Politicians who enlist the pen for war purposes must realise that they are guilty of an offence which brings its own punishment. During the great war of 1914-1919 the British and French Governments encouraged the publication of stories of German atrocities. Feelings were worked up to such a

pitch that, when the war ended, the craving for revenge, being unsatisfied, took the shape of the demand that Germany should pay for her guilt. Every economist realised the folly of the demand. Lord Keynes, in *Economic Consequences of the Peace*, 1919, gave arguments that should have convinced any reasonable man that the reparations would only harm the Allies; but people whose minds had been warped by wrong literature could not understand. To demand reparations was bad economics and worse politics; but vain were the attempts of the ministers and economists to apply the brakes on the mighty movement started by the very pen they had foolishly employed.

But the politicians of Europe learned no lesson from this mistake. German politicians committed the same error. *Mein Kampf* was the typical and culminating product. Shakespeare tells us that Antony who used lies as part of political propaganda came to believe his own lies. The worst victim of propaganda is the propagandist himself. That was what happened to Hitler. Churchill has confessed that Hitler would have won the war if he had not attacked Russia. But how could the author of *Mein Kampf* outgrow the delusion that he had been chosen by God to crush Russia?

When the imagination, stimulated by literature, pulls in one direction, and when reason pulls in the opposite direction, imagination wins. Literature goes straight to the deeper mind of man which has access to the hidden source of energy and controls the superficial layer called reason. Literature can work wonders. I know persons cured of various diseases by the reading of certain books. The explanation of this phenomenon in India is that a book invokes some particular deity. A book, as it were, opens the flood-gates of some mighty supra-personal mind. A good book conjures Christ, a bad book, Satan and war. More powerful than atomic energy is *ātmic* energy, the energy of the soul. If it is necessary to control atomic bombs, it is equally necessary to control *ātmic* bombs, namely, books.

False priestcraft is creeping into the realm of literature. Tennyson placed his arguments before his readers, but the modern writer does not, for example, state why he believes that money-lenders are responsible for the misery of the



masses He himself does not know, because he takes his ideology on trust from some political party. He writes a novel in which the money-lender figures as a villain. The readers, as pointed out by Plato, are apt to suppose that the fact of being strongly affected by the work of art gives them a grasp of the thing represented. They dislike the character of the money-lender depicted in the novel, and so they conclude that all money-lenders in real life are wicked. Thus the writer places his technical skill at the disposal of the politician, just as the scientist offers him his technical skill.

In short, the writer plays upon the feelings of the mob, and induces them to offer blood at the altar of the ideology or modern idol. How are we to account for the idol, the priestcraft and the sacrifice? Plato's description of the democratic man who is hungry for excitement furnishes us with the key. The counterpart of the democratic man of decadent Greece is the typical modern reader who is literate enough to read and not educated enough to understand. What he demands in literature is not truth, but the lie which corresponds to his own wild delusions. Many in England wish to believe certain things about India; and Beverley Nichols assures them that their prejudices constitute a *Verdict on India*. He tells us, for example, that, when he was lying ill in the hospital at Peshawar, India after Indian bent over his sick-bed and poured out wrath on the Congress. The impression he produces is that the entire province was against the Congress, and yet His Excellency the Governor soon discovered that the province was solidly with the Congress!

To mould public opinion, facts are unnecessary. What the reader wants is a tip that relieves him of the fatigue of thinking. Newspapers, therefore, do not publish the provisions of a bill, they publish opinions. Such is the mental inertia of readers that they do not read the statements, and so the editor supplies misleading headlines in gigantic type. The modern democratic man is incapable of abstract thought. He relies on the cartoon which enables him to simplify, vulgarize and visualize an issue, and this gives newspapers their uncanny power. The cartoon is propaganda in homeopathic concentration. It can never fail.

This is because it is unerringly based on the fundamental principle of mental life: identification. Even photographs are potent. The newspapers give a view of a public leader addressing a ladies' meeting: a sea of lovely faces; and the masses, whose ego and sex impulses have been starved, identify themselves with the leader. The economic programme of that leader is felt to be sound. When Norman Angell stood for Parliament he made a discovery.—the people who are ground down by economic laws are uninterested in economics. They take interest in boxing. It is only by reducing economics to a boxing match that one can make them take interest in economics. They must take sides imaginatively in a fight. Professor Keynes did not adopt this method and so the British voters could not follow him. So long as a man is unable to discern that the external entities in whose struggle he takes interest are symbols of his inner state, he is not able to see through the news, views and pictures of the daily paper that he reads and discover that he is being subjected to the daily injection of insidious poison which paralyses judgment.

In that state, the follower of a political party cannot distinguish between the impulses from within and external objects. As Macbeth got the delusion that Banquo was the cause of his misery, the mob readily believes the suggestion that, for example, money-lenders are the cause of all evil. The result is a blood-bath.

The modern politician's technique is to set a powerful majority against a minority. Some defenceless class becomes the target of vituperative literature. The emotions brought into play in the instigators, writers and readers are pride, greed and hate. Herein lies the significant difference between this literature and the seemingly similar literature of the preceding age. Dickens and Tolstoy appealed to the men who enjoyed power, on behalf of the dumb and downtrodden. Each work was a plea for pity. The aim of the modern book is to destroy pity.

The true function of literature is to foster sympathy. Tagore's *Cabuliwallah* is a money-lender, alien and criminal, but we meet him on the human level. In Galsworthy's plays and novels the characters who have sympathy get our sympathy. Forster's *Passage to India* is a plea for mutual under-

standing In fact it is not the writer's ideology but the quality of his heart that makes a book great Theory-ridden people cannot extend sympathy to others Shakespeare's greatness is that he has no theory he has sympathy for all

This faculty to sympathise with all, and to grow thereby into the Universal Man, Christ, distinguishes man from the brute. True literature fosters this. In the course of evolution this instinct appeared late, and it is less stable than the more primitive behaviour patterns like fear, greed and aggression that we share with the brute Books that focus interest on the economic conflicts of practical life inevitably rouse the emotions like greed that stifle sympathy.

To make literature a training specially designed to foster sympathy, our ancients made it a kind of retreat from the business of life The ancient Indian critics say that we are moved, in literature, by *rasas*, not emotions Our emotional reaction to a Juliet in actual life is different from the experience when, through identification with Romeo, we love Juliet. *Rasa* implies absence of practical purpose, presence of imaginative participation, and bliss At the bottom of these is the widening of the ego through sympathy Bhavabhuti therefore asserts that the substratum of all *rasas* is sympathy.

After the student of literature has widened the limits of the ego through exercise of sympathy, it becomes possible for him to react with widened sympathy to the situations of actual life Life which previously appeared as a fight now appears as a game, formerly his reaction was panic or aggression, now it is sympathy and bliss

The psychological hindrances to knowledge and right economic conduct are now removed Thus literature delivers a frontal attack on the pressing economic and political problems of modern life.

Let not the pen run after strange gods. Artistic intuition, as Bergson points out, penetrates into the particular through imaginative sympathy, and sympathy precludes judgment. The method of economics is statistical survey, generalisation and the passing of judgment He who employs literature to demonstrate that all persons who belong to one

class serve no useful purpose, makes literature sin against its own nature

Not that literature does not grasp external reality. The opposite is the truth. As M Rilke shows, it is the artist alone who grasps the complexity of an age. Art is the spontaneous creative activity of the collective mind. In the true artist it gives rise to a symbol the mere contemplation of which resolves the psychological conflicts which obstruct the march of civilization. On the writer rests the hope of mankind

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## BASIC IMPORTANCE OF THE ANCIENT INDIAN LITERATURES

BY RAO BAHADUR SARDAR M. V. KIBE

The connotation of "Literature" is large. But what it generally conveys is *belles-lettres*. In that sense too the ancient literatures of India are vast. They include not only the numerous works still extant in Sanskrit but in other languages too, some of which may have been its contemporaries but many of which are derived from or are modifications of it. Although such is the case, there is one basic thread of thought to be found running through all of them.

The ancient Indian literatures were purely the products of the Indian or Aryan culture or civilisation. They shaped the former and formed the latter. A study of them reveals the growth of society or social life, as well as the fundamentals on which it progressed. A large part of this literature is in writing but there is a not inconsiderable part which has been handed down orally.

The Vedas are the outstanding example of how a large part of that ancient literature was preserved and is still propagated by word of mouth. The earliest extant book of the Vedas does not seem to have been reduced to writing, or at any rate to be available, in the Brahmi script or its contemporaries, as another ancient literature contained in the *Gilgamesh*, has been found carved on bricks in ancient script. Recently a Maratha lady scholar, Mrs. Kamalabai Deshpande, Ph. D., the learned daughter of a learned father, has laid

under contribution, studied and collected the old Marathi songs or poems, which had not yet been reduced to writing but had been handed down by word of mouth. Amongst such literatures, the Vedas, having been given a place in the ritualistic sacrifices which existed even contemporaneously with them, and also clothed with religious sanctity, and as givers of merit, have been preserved intact, although tradition says—and there is evidence, although fragmentary, in support of it—that a large part of them was submerged in the icy avalanche or the deluge that overtook the ancient Aryas in their original home, which was, according to some, in the Arctic region, according to others, in the Punjab.

The Vedas, thus preserved, are probably the most ancient literature of the world but certainly of India. To unravel the knowledge contained in them and to derive wisdom from them has been the attempt of scholars from ancient times to the modern day. It has been established beyond doubt that, as believed by the ancients, they are a store-house of knowledge both physical and moral, scientific and philosophical. Not trained in modern scientific ways, the propagators of the famous six systems of philosophy have yet found in it scientific truths based on physics and chemistry as well as philosophical speculations of the higher order. The system of Vaisheshik, although mainly philosophical, derives its inspiration from and is really based on the text of the Vedas. By the way, in view of the modern development of atomic energy, this system deserves to be more carefully studied than it has been hitherto.

Not only Aranyakas, of which the Upanishads form a great part, but even the encyclopædia which is the *Mahabharat*, claim that what they portray is but an expansion of the Vedas, i. e., of the knowledge stored in them.

The *Mahabharat*, the *Ramayana*, the Puranas and the Jatakas ought to refute the allegation that the ancient Indians did not care for fleeting mundane events. Indeed even the Vedas contain contemporary and earlier history. The Aranyakas and other Vedic literature also do the same. While the *Ramayana*, the kernel of which is historical, mainly narrates the story of a hero, the *Mahabharat* and the Puranas

are full of historical facts. Because these are fragmentary, the ancient versions of the latter works having been redacted and perhaps some of these edited versions or scattered books lost or destroyed, it might appear that a connected history of the Indian people was never in being. There is enough material to give the lie to this belief. However that may be, the learned men of those previous epochs found more time for essential matters than for fleeting events. It appears that the latter were entrusted to bards, which tradition, in parts unaffected by modern conditions, has still continued. The State of Tripura, which claims continuous existence since the days of the *Mahabharat*, has such history kept in its archives, covering a number of centuries. The attention of scholars may be drawn to this material, which deserves to be critically examined.

But the common characteristic and excellence of all the ancient literatures consists in the wealth of material they have for character-building and the elevating of human nature. Even the stories written for the young, as contained in the *Panchatantra*, which has been frequently translated into many languages since the 5th century A.D., and its later and more refined version the "*Hitopadesa*" contain stories with a moral. Previous to them the Buddhist Jatakas, from which the first-named work might have received inspiration, did the same. They may be real histories or not, but they teach a moral. So also the Jain Gathas.

The vast Kavya literature in Sanskrit, apart from the story it contains, is described as being distinguished for its *Rasa*, the quality of exciting the intellect to create pleasure. Although it did not make a distinction in the variety or quality of pleasure, that literature was regarded as the best which fostered and encouraged the higher kind of pleasure. While some authors, such as Bana, indulged in showing their mastery of the language by their style and skill in manipulating sentences and words, playing upon the different meanings of words and producing puzzles, the main theme of the ancient literatures was character-building and devotion of the human thought and mind.

This basic idea has permeated the literature in other languages of India. Kabir and Tulsidas in Hindi, Namdeo

and Tukaram in Marathi, and Chaitanya's devotional songs in Bengali have captured the heart of the masses, by their simplicity of language and their touching the heart-strings as well as by the eternal truth they teach. Even a poet like Moropant in Marathi, who mainly exhibits his mastery of the language, and is a story-teller, has morals to teach, and his object too is to elevate men from the low level of morals and action which they had reached, just as Ramdas, in an earlier age, was endeavouring to rouse the men of his time from the slough of despond into which they had fallen.

No doubt there was produced some literature like the *Amaru Shatak* or even the *Shringar Shatak* of Bhartrihari, which excited carnal passions, but much of such literature was scientific. It also had as its aim the acquisition of real pleasure, as opposed to promiscuous indulgence, leading to the supreme achievement, the unification of man with God.

Apart from the Vedanta literature, the Kavya and Natak (Poetry and Drama) literature in Sanskrit, on which was largely based the same kind of literature in other Indian languages, is of a high order. In the last quarter of a century the influence of Western literature has also been felt in these branches of literature. While the latter is of a worldly character, the former is influenced by the technique of combining moral lessons with pleasure, in some cases bluntly, in others, with extreme delicacy. Even bad characters are depicted, but in the end they also seem to have reformed. The Sanskrit Drama was regulated by rules of decency and delicacy. For instance, tragedy, though almost apparent, was banned. So also was the scene of death or dead bodies, even in battle scenes, which were generally behind the curtains. But in spite of this, Sanskrit dramatists like Kalidas and Bhavabhuti have attained the highest pitch of skill in delineating human nature, as Shudraka has in depicting a revolution. Interspersed is the poetry, which reaches the greatest heights in the literature of the world. Bhasa, perhaps the oldest dramatist discovered, rivals Shakespeare in the number of his dramas and in the human interest and character depiction in them.

If Kalidas had written only *Meghaduta*, his fame would have resounded throughout the world and would have a high place for ever. His epic which depicts some of the kings of

the dynasty in which Rama was born, is a voluminous work, sustaining its interest by the rhythm of language, delineation of scenes and grandeur of conception and ending in showing the tragedy consequent upon an unbalanced and an exclusively pleasure-seeking life. There are other poems which are masterpieces in the language, great in different ways, *e g* , Bharavi's poetry for his elegance of meaning, Dandin's for his lucidity, and Magha's for possessing many qualities.

The basic importance, then, of the ancient literatures of India is due to the fundamentals underlying all of them, consisting of combining pleasure with the endeavour to raise human character and to make the nation an outstanding example of all good qualities such as valour, truth, ambition, non-aggression and devotion to the highest principle, whether a personal deity or an all-pervading force sustaining the world.

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## APPENDIXES



## APPENDIX I

## THE P.E.N. ALL-INDIA CENTRE

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## APPENDIX II

LITERARY ORGANISATIONS AFFILIATED OR  
ASSOCIATED FOR THE CONFERENCE AND  
THEIR DELEGATES

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## APPENDIX IV

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	Mr. E. M. Forster
	Capt. C. W. Swinson
" France	Prof. Olivier Lacombe
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	Francis Brunel
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\* Professors Lowe Ke-Lie and Fang Tung-mei were unable to be present.

## APPENDIX V

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## APPENDIX VI

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\* This list includes all who paid the Delegate's fee, participated in the Conference and/or sent papers, although a few found it impossible to attend.



Shri A C Pandeya  
 Shri Yashwant S Pandya  
 Shri Kalindi Charan Panigrahi  
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 Prof Nirmal Kumar Sidhanta  
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## APPENDIX VII

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## APPENDIX VIII

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